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LEADING ARTICLES:—

Sir Roundell Palmer out of Harness.
The Organization of our Reserve
Forces.
Bankruptcy.

"Our Music-Halls."

The Cost of Jilting.
Children.
NOTES OF THE WEEK.
MEMORANDA.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS:—

Grant's Capture of Richmond.
Chaucer's England.
A Scotch Country Gentleman.
Lucrezia Borgia.

A London Romance.

Hofses.
The Secret Dispatch.
List of New Publications for the
Week.

SIR ROUNDSELL PALMER OUT OF HARNESS.

TRAINING may be a very bad thing for the physical man, but it is a very good thing for the intellectual. A statesman ought always to be up to his work, and usually statesmen cease to be capable as soon as they cease to be, as trainers say, at work. It might not appear respectful if we compared Sir Roundell Palmer to a member of the Oxford crew who, after thoroughly training and going in to win and winning, should give himself up for the next three months to exhausting dissipation; but mentally he is in no better predicament, though morally he occupies a situation which every one respects. In this country we especially esteem the man who stands up for the rights of institutions which he believes to be bound in with the best interests of the community. We may think him utterly wrong, but we allow him to be thoroughly respectable. We may despise the institution, but we value and applaud its defender. The most Radical of us have probably an amount of admiration for the Hardys, Henleys, Knightleys, Heathcotes—alas! that we should have to add the Palmers, nothing shall induce us to add the Mowbrays—which we do not feel for the much more useful men who attack the privileges which these protect. Sir Roundell Palmer's morality in this matter is utterly unsound, and his precautions in the interest of religion are singularly futile; but we all feel that he is doing what he believes, with a righteous enthusiasm which is hardly attainable in the cause of secular reform, to be a most pious work.

There is one gain to the cause of religious liberty when it is opposed by a man of Sir Roundell Palmer's stamp. He does not speak in a vulgar and offensive tone, which is natural to such men as Mr. Hardy, who regard Dissenters as mere annoying accidents, to be forgotten as long as possible, treated with contempt when they must be noticed, and swept out of the way whenever it can be done. Sir Roundell Palmer is a deeply and broadly religious man—not in the mere churchgoing and churchwarden sense, which would include all Mr. Hardy's ecclesiastical conceptions, but in the sense of being a devout student of all Christian theology, and a warm sympathizer with earnest Christians of every name. When he speaks of the preservation of the religious element in the Universities—when he calls them places of religion and learning, and insists that they shall always be so called—when he asserts that "it would be an act of infatuation if the Legislature should ever desire to secularize these institutions, and to deprive them of that which, in the eyes of all who place religion above all other kinds of knowledge, must be their chiefest excellence," he is using language which includes within its comprehensive embrace thoughts and sentiments of which the mere clutching, greedy, im-

perious churchmanship of Mr. Hardy, and the still more vulgar partisanship of that lowest deep of University membership, Mr. Mowbray, are quite incapable. He does indeed insist upon the present connection with the Church being maintained, and he stipulates for the services which are now held being continued, as the only safeguard of that religion which he cannot bear to see imperilled; but he values these, we believe, in the depth of his heart as means, not as ends. Though it would be hard to convince him that without these safeguards the interests of true religion would be safe, he would willingly surrender them if he could be convinced that without them the Universities would turn out as many good Christians as they are supposed to turn out now. If Sir Roundell Palmer believed that such God-fearing men as Mr. Morley, Mr. Bright, and Mr. W. Fowler would be as natural products of the Universities, when thrown open, as himself and Sir John Coleridge and Mr. Gladstone are on the present system, he would no longer resist the change.

This is a great advance in liberality of sentiment; but how weak is the position, regarded in the light of fact and common sense! What is there in Oxford and Cambridge training to make men religious? Absolutely nothing. The men who have kept up the religious reputation of the Universities were disciples of John Henry Newman, whom Oxford repudiated, and of Charles Simeon, whom academic Cambridge scorned. Had the Universities been open, these men would not have had less influence, but more. The truth is, that vital, spiritual religion is not the product of ecclesiastical foundations or of academic restrictions. It is a fire which flashes from soul to soul; and human institutions never have caught, and never will catch, the secret of the flame. It burns best in freedom. It warms the whole heart of the nation. It dies of formal fanning. It expires when free air is denied to it; but it breaks forth afresh and afresh. It glows, beautifully lambent, over the whole surface of this sincerely, though imperfectly, Christian country. You may smother it with bad fuel, but you cannot extinguish it by rude disturbance, or by leaving it to be sustained by the breath of heaven. Can Sir Roundell Palmer, who knows all this, who lives in the belief of it, whose life is made happy by it—can he suppose that the sacred fire is in danger because the Universities are likely to be prevented from forcing it into repulsive forms? He surely knows that no Universities can sustain religion if it is not in the heart of the people, or extinguish it if it is cherished there. Dr. Playfair bears testimony from Scotland how thoroughly without irreligious effect have been the changes in the Universities of that country. So it is in America, and (with differences arising out of the nature of existing institutions) so it is in Canada and in Australia.

Make the Universities the free resort of the nation ; and if the nation is Christian, the Universities must be so.

But what is the result of the present system ? It is to engross for the benefit of a moiety of the nation endowments which, if given in this age, would be given upon principles which would embrace the whole nation. It is to enshrine as something holy that miserable sordid deference to religion because it is respectable, which is of all human states the least religious and the most prolific in sin. Sir Roundell Palmer is said to be a Sunday-school teacher. Every one honours him for his devotion to that most unattractive yet most salutary evangelistic work. What would he think of himself if he found that he was prone to exhort his young disciples to be godly because it was respectable, to be good because it paid, to be pious out of pride, to be Christians because it was "the thing" ? Yet this is the spirit of the sustentation of religion as we now have it in the Universities. It is simply a matter of social exclusiveness. All heart is taken out of it by the formality with which the statutes stipulate for its rigid and unsympathetic observances. Make Oxford and Cambridge free, and then religion will be free also. At present it is a cold, dead thing, influencing the head little and the heart not at all, turning out swells and sycophants and supercilious Tories on the one hand, bitter infidels in the lightly-worn garb of hypocritical Christianity on the other.

Nor is this all. It is important to remember that while you exclude one half of the religious men of England from these Universities, you drive them to others which are almost by profession godless. Now, if godless could be used in the sense of strict secularity, it would not be a term of opprobrium. But a university may become distinguished for its negation of God ; it may be not only secular but anti-Christian. And if universities do not take this character, colleges may ; and if colleges do not, various private educational agencies may. To these are handed over the great mass of young men who, with their parents, are religious in Sir Roundell Palmer's sense, and who, if admitted to great national impartial universities, would never think of being other than their fathers were before them. Is there no danger in driving young men of this sort to identify themselves with education which, in its inception and its theory, is utterly opposed to those Christian verities which, in a great national secular university, would never be attacked ?

Away, then, with the weak reservation to which university reformers are prone to condescend. Let it not be pretended that we regard as sacred those weak and obsolete religious safeguards which are foolishly supposed to preserve the Christianity, and which do, with a vengeance, maintain the Churchmanship of the Universities. The Dissenters from the Church are now so numerous, that to exclude them from any part in the national Universities is a ridiculous as well as a wicked injustice. And the most important bodies of them have lately taken a resolution on the subject of education which renders the defence of an exclusive policy more than ever difficult. They no longer reject educational endowments, as they formerly did. They no longer waive in reference to education, as they still waive in reference to religion, all claim to the national endowments. This is a great change. It makes their hostility all the more formidable, their demands all the more exigent. As a statesman in harness, Sir Roundell Palmer must have conceded all they asked. Out of harness, he is very unlikely to perceive, what is nevertheless perfectly true, that the demands of the Dissenters are absolutely just, and that to yield them freely, and at once, would be the policy most conducive to the national maintenance of true religion.

THE ORGANIZATION OF OUR RESERVE FORCES.

THE discussion raised upon the introduction of the Army Estimates was hardly of sufficient importance to test the opinion of the House of Commons on the military policy of the present Government. But it is understood that a vigorous debate is anticipated upon Lord Elcho's motion relating to the condition of our reserve forces, and that already the note of complaint has been sounded amongst the serried ranks of the Liberal party. It can hardly be matter of surprise that dissatisfaction with our large expenditure and its comparatively petty results (so widely spread as to have penetrated the portals of South Kensington)

should find expression within the walls of the House of Commons. Nor do we doubt that much useful information will be elicited in the course of such a debate ; while opinions, derived from various sources, will stimulate the energy and guide the doubtful steps of our civilian Minister for War. We trust, however, that this grave question of national policy will be discussed in a practical spirit, and that definite objects, with a clear conception of the mode by which those objects may be obtained, will be presented to the notice of the House. In the present state of public opinion the first aim of military reformers ought to be how best to promote the efficiency, not of our aggressive, but of our defensive, forces, and, subject to the question of economy, it is to this point we would draw attention. Mr. Cardwell, recognising this general desire, has taken the initiative by recalling several battalions of our colonial force ; and while reducing the general strength of the army, has increased the numbers of our home garrison by 4,500 men.

Reviewing the numbers upon which we might reckon for the defence of these shores in case of invasion, the War Minister fixed the grand total of troops of all arms at no less a figure than 400,000 men. Of these 92,000 are regular troops, 100,000 militia, 170,000 volunteers, 13,000 yeomanry, and the remainder are pensioners and men of the reserve. It will be admitted that, under these circumstances, the difficulties we may have to contend with will not arise from any insufficiency in the number of men. When, however, we analyze the materials of which this large force is composed, we find abundant reason to doubt whether, in point of efficiency, it can be depended upon. Take the case of the volunteers, as the largest body first. They are men who have never performed the earliest duty of a soldier on a campaign—viz., a journey of ten or fifteen miles in heavy marching order. They have not a knapsack, tent, greatcoat, or water-bottle among them, and consequently have no experience in carrying these necessary articles. Watch again their evolutions at drill. The mere mechanical duty of marching past they perform with tolerable correctness, but when rallying as skirmishers, or even firing in line, their unsteadiness is apparent. Let it, however, be granted that we should not expose the bulk of such troops in the first line, but that our object would be to place them in garrison towns for the relief of our regular battalions. But, if so, how grievous a deduction must be made from our fighting strength, if we have at a stroke to reduce it by 150,000 men. Again, take the case of that arm in which this country is always numerically weak—viz., our cavalry force. Is it possible to believe, when eight or ten months are required to perfect the instruction of our dragoons, that fourteen days' drill will convert a farmer into a cavalry soldier, capable of sustaining the onset of the glittering squadrons of the French guard ? But if our yeomanry are to be limited to the duty of orderlies, how serious is the deduction from our small but expensive cavalry force. In short, the alternative lies before us—either we must cease to pretend to cope in point of numbers with the gigantic armies of the Continent, or we must set about in earnest the task of organizing a national army. In what manner can we frame a system which shall not add to our already heavy expenditure, and yet be capable of expansion for the exigencies of war ? It is not probable that the country would consent to keep on foot a larger army than 90,000 men in a time of profound peace. If, however, by reducing our colonial force, and re-establishing a local army for India, we can afford to enlist men for shorter periods of service, an indefinite number might pass through that apprenticeship in arms which is common to the nations of the Continent. Two or three years of military service would teach a man his duties as a soldier without unduly encroaching upon his career as a civilian. Such men as these, enlisted in a permanent reserve, would afford the most effective support to the standing army of the country.

Another instrument for the organization of a national army we already possess in our volunteer force. Although at present inadequately armed and equipped, and without any principle of coherence between separate corps, the materials of which it is formed are probably the best in the world. The first object ought to be to organize thoroughly in every district. Let each general officer in command invite the co-operation of volunteer corps, in carrying out a system of combined operations. The rivalry between volunteers and regulars at all times stimulates activity, and may tend to discover the deficiencies of either.

What, however, we specially need is, the organization of

supply and transport for large bodies of men in the field. Without experience in these necessary duties, the mere aggregation of armed men is altogether useless. It might not be impossible to train a staff of officers for the performance of these duties for the volunteers, and every opportunity of instructing them in the field should be taken. Ammunition-waggons ought also to accompany every brigade of infantry, that the system of serving out ammunition under fire might be rendered easy by constant practice. If exercised for short periods with the regular troops in flying camps, our volunteers would speedily learn something of the realities of war, and without this experience they can never safely be brought into the actual presence of the enemy. Surely to render ourselves secure, and to turn to good account the time already devoted to martial exercises, would be objects worth the sacrifice of a few days' toil. Let us, in addition to the improvement of our volunteer force, get rid of the constant transport of troops to distant dependencies; let us, by short enlistments, relieve our overburdened pension list, and create a formidable reserve; and let us spend no more money upon useless fortifications. We have amongst us the finest *matériel* for soldiers which any nation can possess, and the experience of other systems by which that *matériel* may be perfected. Let us, then, adapt to better use our present opportunities, and without adding to the burdens of the country, create for ourselves a machinery capable of expansion in time of war, and better calculated to develop and maintain the military resources of the British empire.

BANKRUPTCY.

SOMEHOW misfortune seems to hang alike over bankrupts and over the laws relating to them. Bill after Bill is passed, and sometimes from the wrong principles, or the no principles, on which the measure is based, sometimes from the amendments in committee which transform a complete and well-balanced Act into a scrappy and unworkable one, our laws on this subject still continue to be a disgrace to a commercial nation. The promise of a measure to amend the law of bankruptcy has come to be a common form in the Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament, and lately the introduction of the measure has only been a prelude to the shelving of it. Last session, however, gave us an instalment of reform by putting a check on the manufacture of deeds of arrangement, which had grown to such an extent that the appearance of any man before the Court of Bankruptcy was a proof either of comparative honesty or of stupidity. This session we are promised an amendment and codification of the whole law, including, in a separate Act, abolition of imprisonment for debt. Of the wisdom of such abolition we have serious doubts, and we believe those doubts are shared by most persons whose business it is to recover debts. Imprisonment for debt has now ceased to be a grievous hardship, since a debtor can always obtain his release from custody by an application to the Court of Bankruptcy. But that is exactly what a very large number of debtors have a great objection to do, not because they dread the disgrace of the Court, but because their own past proceedings will not bear the light. The number of men in London alone who can only be induced to pay their debts by the dread of imprisonment would astonish the House of Commons; and these are mostly men able to pay, but having no property that can be seized. Everything they appear to be possessed of is found on investigation to belong to their wives, their daughters, or other relatives; or else they rent furnished houses. There is nothing that can be touched either by the sheriff's officer or by the messenger of the Court of Bankruptcy; and, as to make such a man a bankrupt implies the expenditure of a handsome sum of money out of the pocket of the creditor, for which there is no return whatever, this class of debtors will in future go scot-free, as it is simply impossible to include them in any penal clause, and they will laugh at the Attorney-General's proposal to place their future earnings at the mercy of the Court. These men can be reached by imprisonment for debt, and by that alone, while the process is so simple and inexpensive to the creditor that he need never hesitate to take advantage of it; as many pounds having to be spent to make the debtor a bankrupt as shillings are spent now in locking him up in Whitecross-street.

There are three principal points to be considered in amending the law. The first is to divide the property of

an insolvent among his creditors as cheaply and as quickly as possible; the second is to prevent people from recklessly contracting debts; and the third is to relieve those who have become insolvent from pure misfortune or from error in judgment only. As to the first of these points Sir Robert Collier proposes to leave the realization of the assets and the division of them to the creditors themselves, they electing a trustee, who will be subject to a committee of supervision. Any one who has much acquaintance with bankruptcy knows the difficulty of finding a suitable creditor to be assignee under the present system, or if he be found, the difficulty of inducing him to be active in the realization of the estate. All the work is left to the solicitor, who gets paid for doing it. How, under the proposed new law, a trustee and a committee of creditors to look after him are to be found, we do not know. If found at all it will be among the friends of the bankrupt, and their whole aim will be to make things pleasant for him. The fact is that so soon as a debtor passes the doors of the court, his creditors give up the whole matter for a bad job, write off the amount due as a bad debt, and are only anxious to forget all about it. This is the result of past experience, as it is quite an exceptional circumstance for a creditor to receive a substantial dividend. Whether Sir R. Collier's proposal to make the future earnings of a bankrupt who pays less than 10s. in the pound liable to his past debts for six years after his bankruptcy will produce a change in this respect can only be guessed at. Should it be so, however, we might expect to see creditors more inclined to take an interest in the estates of their bankrupt debtors; but in the mean time we must assume that the mere change in the handling of the assets will not increase either the amount or the speedy realization of dividends.

Next, as to the prevention of reckless trading or reckless expenditure. At present, a bankrupt is entitled to pass his last examination so soon as the Court is satisfied with his accounts. And then comes the question of the bankrupt's discharge. Unless the bankrupt has committed a misdemeanour, or has either carried on trade by means of fictitious capital, or contracted debts without reasonable expectation of payment, or wilfully omitted to keep proper books of account, or indulged in rash speculation or extravagance of living, or vexatiously defended an action, he is entitled to his discharge. That is how the law now stands, and we venture to say that nine bankrupts out of every ten come within those provisions, and yet, that in eight cases out of the nine, a creditor would be unable to prevent the order of discharge being granted. Let the bankrupt take care not vexatiously to defend an action, and he is tolerably safe. Look at the case of contracting debts without reasonable expectation of payment; why, almost every bankrupt does it, and yet no individual creditor can prove that his debt was so contracted; for the bankrupt replies that he had reasonable expectations of continuing his business a sufficiently long time to obtain more goods, and with the produce of such goods to pay that particular debt: and the Court is satisfied with the explanation. It will always be so; such provisions are in reality penal, and as such will be construed strictly against any one attempting to enforce them, and we despair of any hard and fast line being drawn by statute that will meet the varied circumstances attending each case which comes before the Court. Sir R. Collier's 10s. dividend or no discharge will not do it; such a clause will simply increase the number of that class of persons mentioned at the beginning of this article, and who are amenable to nothing but imprisonment for debt. The only satisfactory method will be to give the widest discretion as to the discharge of the bankrupt to the new judge, and to take care that the post is filled by the best man, letting him take rank and pay with the chiefs of the Superior Courts at Westminster. Whether the question of discharge should come in all cases before the judge, or whether it should come before him on appeal, and the present commissioners should be retained is a question of detail; but what we particularly urge is that no sharp line should be drawn by Act of Parliament specifying to whom the discharge shall be granted, and upon what terms, but that the discretion of the judge shall be wide and as unfettered as possible.

That this is necessary will be admitted, we think, on considering the third object of any amendment in the law—namely, the relief of the unfortunate or of those who have erred only in judgment. What greater hardship can be conceived than refusing a discharge to holders of shares in "Overend, Gurney," or many of the companies now in liquidation,

where the holders' bankruptcies have been caused wholly by the calls of the liquidators, and many of whom are perfectly solvent but for those calls? Within the last few years, hundreds of such unfortunates have claimed the assistance of the Court who have been unable to pay a 10s. dividend. Fancy an unfortunate schoolmistress—and they are very apt to make such investments—whose savings are invested in the shares of a bubble bank. All her assets, except her furniture, were in these same bank shares; her furniture will, perhaps, sell for £200; her debts are, say, £100; and the liquidator makes a call of £500. The case is common enough, unfortunately. Half the £200 obtained from the furniture goes to pay the costs of the bankruptcy, and the bankrupt pays a dividend of about 3s. in the pound. Is this unfortunate woman not to obtain her discharge because she has not paid 10s. in the pound? We cannot think that this will be the decision of Parliament. It is, of course, impossible in a short article to do more than point out some questions that will require careful consideration when the proposed Bills come before the House in committee; and we trust that the public will give its attention to the subject, so that confusion may not grow to be worse confounded; but that the new laws may be made complete and satisfactory, dealing out strict justice to the fraudulent, and merciful consideration to the unfortunate.

"OUR MUSIC-HALLS."

A WRITER in the current number of *Tinsleys' Magazine* calls attention to the gross outrages upon decency committed by several of the most popular of our music-halls, and asks for a remedy. This, coming in conjunction with Lord Kimberley's Habitual Criminals Bill, with Lord Russell's confession that the semi-voluntary system of public education has not worked as it ought to have done, with certain well-directed efforts to shut up the night-houses in the Haymarket, with some more doubtful attempts to curtail the selling of intoxicating liquors on Sunday, and with several similar tentatives towards special governmental interference, is sufficiently significant. It shows clearly that, while respecting the principle which gives the utmost freedom to every unconvicted person, and which deprecates any attempt at forcing morality upon a people by the exercise of a paternal government, we have come to believe that there are times in which the principle may properly, though temporarily, be set aside. Let the principle remain as a standard; but let us work in the mean time such reforms as expediency demands, and return to the principle when we are better fitted for it. Only the principle must not be forgotten, as it is apt to be, in the present hurry for immediate and forcible legislation. So far as the music-halls are concerned, we have not a word to say against vigorous interference. Who that can remember the Haymarket of a few years ago will venture to say that such special interference as put a stop to those shameless orgies which there made the night hideous has not been productive of both immediate and permanent good? When it was first proposed to shut up those Haymarket houses which sold intoxicating liquors the whole night through, and which were merely advertising mediums for every *communis meretrix* who chose to ply there her offensive trade, it was said that the effort would only drive the bees out of one hive to pitch upon another elsewhere. But such was not the case. Doubtless the women were not whiffed out of existence by the breath of an edict; but they were deprived of a resort which gave them many advantages, and they were, in a measure, deprived of the assistance of the even more infamous persons who gathered about them, and lived upon the proceeds of their calling. But, as the writer whom we have mentioned, points out, the evil that we had scattered and weakened is again growing into astounding proportions; and it now has its headquarters at the music-halls. He says, further, "We are trying to banish the open profession of prostitution from our streets, and the logic of the case demands that we should do something towards the removal of those far more dangerous exhibitions which public assembly-rooms display. Englishmen profess to be shocked by the unblushing immorality of the Bal Mabille and the Closerie des Lilas; but there is in reality little to distinguish these places of amusement from several of our music-halls, except the fact that the women, who form the principal feature of both, are in Paris somewhat prettier and a good deal better dressed than their colleagues here. . . . It is impossible to over-estimate the importance and magnitude of the effects which these nightly displays of vice under alluring

guises must have upon the population of a great city. The men who frequent the music-halls are, for the most part, young; they have not been educated and tempered by experience; they are mostly of a class not controlled even by the æsthetic limitations of good taste; and they are frequently in positions of trust, where a single lapse from rectitude of conduct may be an irremediable step, leading directly to the direst consequences. Of course it is impossible to make men moral by Act of Parliament, any more than it is possible to cure them of vulgarity or bad taste by the same means. But, at least, the law may step in to see that public decency is not insulted, and to remove that temptation from places of amusement which it is already trying to banish from our thoroughfares."

With this suggestion we heartily agree. Of course it will be said in reply that if you drive these people out of one stronghold, they will take refuge in another. But where are they to get it? When they were routed out of the Haymarket, they swarmed into the music-halls, chiefly because there intoxicating liquors are sold. But once get them out of the music-halls, and whither are they to go? They cannot engage elsewhere the aid of such attractive accessories as "bright lights, tolerably good music, and a fair share of intoxication." The theatres can never become their place of resort; there the entertainment has a certain prominence, and people are not permitted to cluster together, talk, and drink hot brandy-and-water in face of the audience. "You cannot annihilate the women," it may be objected. "They must go somewhere. They may scatter themselves along the streets and thoroughfares, for example." If so, well and good. An enemy scattered is half vanquished. Disperse them first, and deal singly with them afterwards. That is to say, that, if the contents of the music-halls are emptied into the streets, it will be the policeman's duty to see that public decency be preserved, and that no passer-by be annoyed.

Dealing with such a matter, any legislative enactment must confer wide powers of discretion upon its agents. Nor do we require any imperial edict to confer such powers. The Chief Commissioner of Police has all the authority that is required; and upon him would rest the responsibility of seeing that proper and efficient instruments were used in the furtherance of this temporarily difficult project. It is possible that occasional injustice might be inflicted; but we do not think it probable, as the persons of whom we speak are, with scarcely an exception, known to the police. Besides, it is not against themselves personally, but against their congregation in certain places, that such an order would have to be issued. They are only requested to "move on." To some people it may seem preferable that this exhibition of vice, instead of being paraded in the streets, should be bottled up in a music-hall, or elsewhere. But there is little parade in the streets, while in the music-halls vice obtains the aid of most powerful assistants. With the loss of this attraction the music-halls would very probably lose their popularity; but we do not know that such a result would be wholly an evil.

THE COST OF JILTING.

IT is not too much to assert that the whole male sex rejoices when a man obtains from a woman damages for breach of promise of marriage. There is something very bold and fine in a man rising up to protest against the ordinarily conceded right of a woman to do as she likes in love matters; and it is so seldom we find a man willing to risk public laughter by engaging in such an effort, that we are bound to look upon him, when he appears, as a noble and exemplary martyr. But when the result of the suit is a decisive victory, the martyr ceases to be a martyr and becomes a hero. He has avenged his sex. He has turned the tables upon those whom we fear. He has called upon the laws of his country to say that there is no sex in wrongdoing, and that a woman is as justly punishable as a man for cutting capers on the delicate boundary-line of marriage. We look upon a gentleman named Eden, who has just been solaced with £300 because his feelings had been trifled with by a lady named Ormond, as a public benefactor. Of course no thought of pecuniary advantage entered into his mind in instituting these proceedings. It was rather to warn womankind against the consequences of fickleness and the hearkening to intermeddling friends that he wished to recover damages. There is no reason to believe that Mr. Eden does not regard with as tender feelings as ever that matronly lady who formerly smiled upon him. Probably he has no ill-will against her, and takes her £300 with compunction; for it is clear that the prime cause of his misfortune was not the lady herself but an elderly friend. This person comes upon the

stage in a mysterious fashion. At first we only hear of the lovers. The one was a widow, about forty years of age; the other a widower, about sixty. After having been inconsolable for a certain period, Mrs. Ormond was introduced to the plaintiff at Wargrave Regatta. She kindly drove him to Twyford station in her carriage, while he in return promised to visit her at Reading, where she was staying. He did so, and love entered the heart of Eden. At her request he took lodgings in that fortunate town, which the widow had chosen as her home; he introduced Mrs. Ormond to his friends as his future wife: and the two inconsolables naturally looked forward to be consoled. But the drama was flowing too smoothly. It wanted some sharp and disconcerting scene; and it wanted some character not wholly given over to moonlight walks and the delight of letter-writing. Mrs. Todd appeared.

Mrs. Todd, as we have hinted, is an enigma. We cannot decipher her relations with either party in the strife; but it is apparent from the beginning that she is destined to be the evil genius of the elderly couple. The love-sick widow at first rebels against the unsympathetic opposition of Mrs. Todd to the match. She writes to her Eden that, after having spent a truly delightful day with him at Slough, "old Mrs. Todd was very disagreeable at supper." Old Mrs. Todd—she becomes "old Mother Todd" as the plot thickens—asks awkward questions. She threatens to make inquiries about this gay Lothario of sixty, who had carried off the heart of this merry young widow of forty. But the latter confides her trouble to her lover, and naïvely remarks, "I said nothing to her, but retired to rest very happily." The young widow having retired to rest in a happy frame of mind, after her supper, sleeps long the next morning, for, when she gets down, Mother Todd is gone to London. What the mission of this mysterious person is we are not allowed to learn; but, adds the widow, she "is to return this evening, I believe, most likely with a volubility of revenge, in words or temper, with me, which I shall not regard the slightest." This is ungrammatical, but comforting; and it is apparent that at this time Eden had nothing to fear from Mother Todd. Indeed, in the next letter, dated two months afterwards, no mention of any kind is made of this spectre at the feast of love. On the contrary, the widow has grown cheerful and writes to her lover to say how truly obliged she is for the "nice cask of ale which arrived safe on Saturday." The widow, as we say, is weak in her grammar, or perhaps she has a contempt for adverbs; but, be that as it may, these expressions of gratitude must have been pleasant to the purchaser of the nice cask of ale. For she says, "I have tapped it, and it is very nice, and I shall much enjoy it." With these thanks for the cask of ale she sends her love to him, adding, "What a lovely morning it is; it would just do for a nice walk out to the Merry Maidens." After this brief glimpse of sunshine, the storm breaks. Mother Todd, it seems, has been getting accomplices in order to work the destruction of the romance. The widow begins to fear, and adjures him in simple and forcible language not to desert her. "I do hope you will stick to poor me, for old Mother Todd is more inveterate than ever, but I am so sick of saying any more about it. I do hope you and I shall defeat the lot.—Your own Jane." There is now "a lot"—an indefinite quantity, which may include any amount of conspiracy, opposition, and even coercion. At any rate, we can discover no more love-letters. The Mother Todd influences have been brought to bear upon their victim. The last communication opens with the terrible word, "Sir." Eden must have paled upon seeing that formal and fatal indication of what was coming. Jane now asserts, coldly, that she never, on any occasion, gave him the slightest reason to suppose that she meant "to contract a marriage" with him; and this she follows up with the cruel stab, "Your position in life is by no means a station suitable to my own." The phraseology is foggy, but the meaning is clear. It merely acknowledges that Mother Todd and "the lot" have triumphed. Love's young dream has been shattered by this vague and shadowy enemy, whom we see stalking moodily across the stage, or frowning threateningly from out the wings. Explicitly, though as usual ungrammatically, Jane bids Eden begone, and one can imagine the frown on Mother Todd's face relaxing into a grim smile.

In thus refusing, at the last moment, to surrender her heart—to say nothing of £700 a year—into the keeping of Eden, Mrs. Ormond doubtless fancied she could do what she liked with her own. But the law is severe upon inconstancy; and Mr. Eden, having urged his claim for damages done to his feelings, received £300 from the widow. Had she been allowed to follow her own tender impulses, we doubt not that such a climax would never have been reached by the story. But Mrs. Ormond was to experience the evil which a multitude of counsellors inevitably brings; and having in a weak moment listened to the

voice of the worldly-wise, and resolved to crush out the innocent love of her young and inexperienced heart, was forthwith reminded by the jury that such instability of purpose is, in a sense, criminal. If we could only be assured that old Mother Todd had to suffer part of the penalty, we should be doubly satisfied by the verdict; but that is too much to hope for. Mephistophiles prompts, but Faust has to pay the piper. In the mean time, we can only regard the verdict as an opportune warning to all young persons and others who have imbibed the notion that a woman may commit breaches of promise with impunity. It is a notion which is the parent of a good many social tragedies—and farces, also; and it is one which leads a good many people into grievous danger of having confiding and impulsive letters read to a grinning court and a matter-of-fact jury. Perhaps Mother Todd, with her opinions upon "position in life" and "station," was quite right; but a woman who abides by the decision of such a judge should see that she has not beforehand compromised herself in little missives of thanks for a nice cask of ale, or some such similar compliment. Perhaps, however, Mrs. Ormond, having paid £300 to be allowed to remain single, may consider her liberty cheap at the money.

CHILDREN.

PERHAPS there is no truer thing in Shakespeare than his division of the life of man into so many ages, each of which is represented by a separate player upon the world's stage. It is not easy for any one in after life to realize the fact that he or she was once, and not so very long ago, a damp, unpleasant baby. Of that first part of our existence none of us know much; but of our second part—

"The whining schoolboy, with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school,"

almost all of us retain a very lively recollection. Not that we were all whining, or all crept unwillingly to school; but, nevertheless, the joys and sorrows of those days are indelibly printed on our memories, rather as happening to some boy or girl of our acquaintance, and who was dear to us, with whom we sympathized, and whom we pity or admire still, than as having occurred to us in our own early youth. In those days joy was ecstasy and sorrow was despair; sensation was intense but brief; now it is faint and long drawn out. There were terrible moments in that spring-time of life. Who does not remember the first day at school when turned into the playground among a lot of big, rough, unsympathizing, strange boys?—good fellows, most of them, but terrible in their want of veneration for all appertaining to the home and adjuncts of their small new schoolfellow. Then to some came nights when they lay down in misery, and mornings when they awoke with an undefined sensation of dread, all because of that Greek or Latin in which they were consciously deficient. There used to be, too, masters who, not content to punish with cane or task, would scold with a shrewish, reckless tongue; from long practice clever at wounding the feelings of children, knowing their tenderest parts both in body and in spirit. It has happened to a boy who has broken down in a line of Latin to be denounced by his master, before the whole school, as a thief who was picking his father's pocket, in that he had not learned what his father had paid for his being taught. Of course the dull and careless boy puts his tongue in his cheek and grins the moment the master's eyes are turned away, while one who is sensitive and high-spirited is filled with passionate indignation. Such a boy feels injured and outraged, and the insult rankles in his heart, possibly for the rest of his life. He never hears of or thinks of his old master but—like the schoolboy when told that Julius Caesar in danger of drowning swam to land carrying his Commentaries in his teeth—he exclaims audibly or mentally, "the beast." In these latter days flogging seems to be pretty well abolished, but we will venture to say that a boy who is worth anything will feel less dishonoured by a caning than by the scolding of a savage and spiteful man.

But to leave schoolmasters and to come to the parents themselves. Do they, as a rule, treat their children with an intelligent sympathy? A man whose days are spent in the City, and whose talk is of stocks and funds, of law, or of the produce-market, what is generally his idea of duty to his children? Probably it is to leave them as much money as possible. He forgets the romance of his own childhood, and how he once was entranced by Robinson Crusoe; how his soul went out with that desolate hero as he built his hut to dwell in; how his flesh crept on his little bones at the footprint in the sand; and how he felt that to be shipwrecked on a desert island was

a blessing reserved by the gods for those especially favoured by them. If a man would only call these things to mind, he would tell the goodwife at home to be a little blind to the torn knickerbockers and dirty boots of the boys, who have their own desert island, their canoes, their savages, and their wild beasts, even as he had in the days that come not again to him. Perhaps, though, they may come again to him, if, instead of ridiculing the romance of his children's lives, and chilling the best and most joyous side of their natures, he sympathizes with them. Then, perhaps, they will let him watch them as they make their own cave, and plant the willow wands that are to sprout and grow and hide the entrance to their retreat. If he has been a companion to them both in body and in spirit, they will take him into their confidence, and use his greater muscular strength to assist them in their labours; of his intellect in such matters they will, at the best, we fear, have but a low opinion, for he must not expect to rival the great Crusoe himself. Then, as he becomes their beast of burden, their hewer of wood, their delver in the soil, perhaps those long lost days may come again. If then, with the sweat of unaccustomed labour on his brow, he lies on the green turf, a little off from the wild shrubbery where the children have their own domain, and watches the little Crusoe as he walks around his island, and in pretended unconsciousness comes near the band of whispering savages, there will be a lighter heart within his breast than within that of many a more successful and perhaps many a better man. On the other hand, if he has treated his children's romances, with ridicule, has made fairies a laughing-stock, denied the existence of the great Crusoe, and has sat in the seat of the scorner, he had better not go near the children when their small hearts beat high and their souls pant after the unknown. The first glance of an unsympathizing person scatters their imaginations; each one will walk off in a different direction, and while the intruder is near their joys are ended. Perhaps the sight of this may make him touchy, and he takes the opportunity to remark upon troublesome children always digging holes, making themselves dirty, and tearing their clothes. The man who does this may be pronounced by his friends a good father, he may leave his children abundance of money, and when he is dead and gone they may remember him with respect as an excellent man of business, prudent and honourable, but their hearts will not go up to him with passionate yearning and affection, nor until they themselves are old men and women will they always mention his name with that tenderness of voice and look of love that should keep his memory green to his children's children after him.

It is given but to very few of us to hand down to posterity a name made great and famous in the world's strife. We are most of us plodding, uninteresting folk, who seem to leave no mark on the world: history will never know us. But the capacity for producing either misery or happiness is hereditary, and does not stop with us. The children of captious, exacting parents are often themselves captious and exacting; while the memory of loving sympathy bestowed upon ourselves in our young days begets in us the like sympathy towards others. In this way we can all do a good work in the world, and leave behind us loving remembrances. What is it a man dwells upon in the memory of parents passed away? We fancy it is the games played and races run together rather than the money left behind by them. It is the parents who must really educate the child; the schoolmaster will never do it. He may cram a certain amount of Greek and Latin into a boy's head, but there he stops. He will never supply the place of the father. It is for the latter to rouse in a child a taste for what is noble and beautiful. Above all, youth should be a time for love and peace and happiness; for none can say what shall come after! Who does not creep with pain at the cry of a child? Let the little ones, at all events, have a happy childhood to look back upon, and then let fate do her worst, it cannot rob them of the remembrance of the past joys, which are their inheritance for ever.

It is contemplated by the friends and admirers of the philosopher Alexander von Humboldt, in America, to celebrate the centennial anniversary of his birth, the 14th of September next, by erecting a suitable monument of marble in one of the parks in New York. Other Americans propose to remove the remains of William Penn from England to Pennsylvania, and to erect a splendid monument over them. It appears they were buried in a leaden coffin, and their transportation to America will not be difficult. There would be a peculiar propriety in doing this, as the chief fame of Penn rests on his founding the colony that bears his name—now the second State in the Union,—and the just government he instituted and administered therein.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE directors of the amalgamated Opera companies have issued their programme for the season which begins on the 30th of this month. Certainly, they offer a good show of names in their list of singers; engagements have been made with Madame Adelina Patti, Mdle. Vanzini, Mdle. Locatelli, Mdle. Grossi, Madame Tagliafico, and Mdle. Pauline Lucca; also Mdle. Christine Nilsson, Mdle. Ilma di Murska, Mdle. Sinico, Mdle. Scalchi, Mdle. Bauermeister, and Mdle. Titians; Signor Mongini, Signor Corsi (of the theatre St. Carlo, Lisbon, Milan, &c.—his first appearance), Signor Naudin, Signor Chelli, Signor Bulterini, Signor Marino, and Signor Tamberlik (his first appearance these four years); Signor Graziani, Signor Bagagiolo, Signor Cotogni, Signor Tagliafico, Signor Ciampi, Mr. Lyall, Signor Fallar, Signor Polonini, Signor Foli, Signor Campi, and Mr. Santley. The list of operas, on the other hand, is scanty of novelty, and the "casts" are not so strong as we were led to expect that they would be. We have already pointed out that the engagement of a number of celebrated singers does not mean that they shall be all engaged at the same time, or that the operas must necessarily be crowded with excellence. Indeed, we observe in this list of probable casts a judicious distribution of strength, which is likely to be at once moderately successful and decidedly economical. For the rest, we can only add that "Hamlet" is to be produced, and that Signor Arditì is to be the conductor. But all these arrangements are, of course, subject to modifications, and it remains to be seen how an opera-house which has an unthreatened monopoly is likely to please its patrons.

How many times did Robert the Bruce observe the spider climb up the wall of the cave? For the ninth time in succession Cambridge has been beaten in the inter-University boat-race—beaten by three boat-lengths. The result was very generally anticipated, one of the Cambridge crew having had to be replaced only five days before the contest. That, with a new man in the boat, Cambridge did so well (leading for two miles of the course) almost makes one fancy that, with her original crew, all in good health and training, she would this year have stopped the monotonous succession of her reverses. As it was, the race was rowed in the shortest time of any on record—in 20 minutes 6½ seconds. In 1860 the course was got over in 26 minutes 5 seconds. Last year's race, the quickest except the present, occupied 20 minutes 56 seconds. On Wednesday the Cambridge crew had its usual ill-luck, and lost the toss for choice of side; but the advantages to be derived by winning the choice are very variously estimated. The day was showery, cloudy, and cold; but the arrangement for rowing the race in the afternoon drew an immense crowd down to the banks of the river between Putney and Mortlake. Mr. George Morrison undertakes to coach the Cambridge crew for next year, and promises a better pick of men. It is in every way highly desirable, to quicken the interest in the race, that Cambridge should, at least for once, prove the winner.

THERE is no danger that our national sports of horse-racing, cricket, and boating will ever decay while they take such a hold upon all classes of people. It must have been extremely gratifying to our aquatic friends from the Universities to have seen the evident interest taken in the boat-race by the cabmen and omnibus-drivers of the metropolis, whose light and dark blue ribbons were freely exhibited *before* the race, though we regret to charge many of them with a want of moral courage, proved by the fact that not a few changed their favours *after* the race, and were thus enabled to sport the winning colours, and take credit for their superior sagacity. But this kind of moral support was not confined to the rougher sex. We hear of one young lady whose noisy support of the Cambridge crew got her into slight trouble, a prosaic policeman actually bringing her before the magistrate for "annoying gentlemen in Regent-street." The evidence went to show that she was dressed in light blue, and was shouting at the top of her voice, "Go ahead, Cambridge for ever!" and was far from sober. The lady's solicitor said that she was a Cambridge woman, and apologized that her enthusiasm on behalf of her county should have led her into difficulty. Her patriotism cost her twenty shillings.

SPAIN has resolved on doing away with the conscription after the present draft for the army has been completed. The

Republicans recently brought forward a motion for the abolition of this objectionable way of raising an army, and drew a highly coloured (but probably not untruthful) picture of the misery created by the system in the homes of the humbler classes. Prim, the Minister of War, admitted the justice of these denunciations, and said he had always opposed conscription in the Cortes, and had indeed been elected specially on that point. He had in nowise changed his opinion on the subject, but, in the present state of affairs, to do away with conscription, and to depend on voluntary enlistment, would be to necessitate a large increase in the soldiers' pay, and the granting of bounties; and for this the Treasury had not the necessary funds. Topete, speaking on behalf of the navy, argued to the same effect, and said they could not at present afford to compete with the merchant service, which gives higher pay than the fleet. The Cortes was not entirely satisfied with these explanations, and referred the subject to a committee of seven, of which General Milans del Bosch and Señor Castelar were members. Ultimately it was decided that there should be no more conscriptions after the present, and this decision has given very general delight. It appears that Spain requires an army of 80,000 men but with her large population she might surely obtain such a force, and a corresponding navy, without coercing the patriotism of her people. It is curious, by the way, to find this semi-barbaric country quietly settling these matters for itself in a popular assembly. In point of fact, the Republic is established at this moment; how long it may continue is still somewhat doubtful.

We have not heard the last of M. Henri Rochefort, though his *Lanterne* has been extinguished for some time. It appears that that gentleman has been invited by more than 500 electors of Paris to put up for one of the districts of that city, and in his communication to the *Avenir National* upon the subject, M. Rochefort says he shall accept the invitation.

THE Bill to amend "The Representation of the People Act, 1867," has been printed. Its provisions are as follows:—The paragraph numbered four of the third section of the principal Act is repealed. The paragraph numbered four of the sixth section of the principal Act is repealed. The seventh section of the principal Act, the paragraphs thereunto annexed, and the exceptions and provisos thereby created, are repealed. From and after the passing of this Act the owner of any dwelling-house, or other tenement, situated in a parish wholly or partly in a borough in England or Wales, may be rated to the poor-rate instead of the occupier. The owner of such dwelling-house or tenement may pay the said poor-rate, or enter into any composition for the payment thereof, on behalf and instead of the occupier, to the same extent and in the same manner as if the principal Act had never passed. The rating of the owner instead of the occupier, and the payment of the said poor-rate by the owner shall not affect the right of the occupier as the inhabitant of a dwelling-house within a borough to vote for a member or members to serve in Parliament, pursuant to the second paragraph of the third section of the principal Act. The 28th and 29th sections of the principal Act, and the form set forth in Schedule E of the said Act, are repealed. The 49th section of the principal Act is repealed. This Act, so far as is consistent with the tenor thereof, and with the amended franchise thereby created, shall be construed as one with the enactments of the principal Act.

THE editor of "Debrett's House of Commons" has sent to the *Times* the following interesting statistics of the present House:—"Of graduates there are 338; of these 151 are *alumni* of Oxford, 122 of Cambridge, 1 of Durham, 16 of London, 22 of Dublin, and 26 of Scotland. The number educated at public schools is 287, of which Eton contributed 131, Harrow 68, Rugby 29, Charterhouse 8, Winchester 13, Westminster 20, St. Paul's and Merchant Taylors' 1 each, King's College 7, and University College School 9. The legal profession is represented by 120 gentlemen, of whom 102 have been called to the English bar, 13 to the bar in Ireland, and 5 to the Scottish bar, the remaining 10 being attorneys. The army contributes 98 members, and the navy 13; of bankers there are 15, and of commercial men 136. There are 5 medical practitioners, and a like number of civil engineers, 3 University professors, and one Dissenting minister. The nobility is represented by 3 Irish peers, by 40 heirs apparent, and 14 heirs presumptive to peerages, and by 52 younger sons of peers. Of

Privy Councillors and baronets there are 52 each; of knights, 7; of heirs-apparent to baronets, 16; and of heirs presumptive, 3. The number of gentlemen who have changed or added to their patronymics is 29; 90 have served the office of sheriff, and three that of Lord Mayor of London; 10 are lords-lieutenants of counties, 7 are recorders, 9 have been in the diplomatic service, and 129 have represented other constituencies than those for which they now sit. Ten fathers are each honoured by having a son in the House, and there are no less than 24 pairs of brothers, exclusive of three brothers of one family."

On Tuesday morning the annual Parliamentary breakfast of the Liberation Society took place at the Cannon-street Hotel, under the presidency of Mr. C. Reed, M.P. Amongst those present were Mr. Miall, M.P.; Mr. Gourlay, M.P.; Mr. Candlish, M.P.; Mr. Downing, M.P.; Sir J. Gray, M.P.; Mr. McLaren, M.P.; Mr. Macfie, Mr. Crum-Ewing, Sir G. Young, the Hon. Auberon Herbert, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Richard, M.P.; Mr. Clayden, Mr. Boyd Kinnear, &c. The chairman congratulated those present on the progress which the principles advocated by the Liberation Society had made. Men of all denominations were members of the society, which had for its object freedom of religious worship. Mr. Richard, M.P., introduced the subject of the Irish Church, on which Mr. McLaren, Mr. Crum-Ewing, and Sir J. Gray also spoke. Sir G. Young spoke on University Tests, and was followed by Mr. Herbert and Mr. Brodrick. Mr. Candlish, M.P., dwelt on the Burials Bill, and Mr. Clayden on the Endowed Schools Bill.

THE Reform League has ceased to exist. On Saturday last, at a large special meeting of the General Council and Delegates from the metropolitan branches, the following resolutions, which had been unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Executive Committee held on the previous evening (Friday), were submitted and carried unanimously:—

"1. This committee, having taken into consideration the position of the League, arising from the retirement of the president and secretary, and from the probability of the ballot and the repeal of the ratifying fetters on the suffrage being carried into effect under the present Government, and that there is a very general impression of the League having accomplished substantially the objects of its original programme, are of opinion that no further agitation can be usefully carried on by this association in its present form, and that it is therefore advisable to dissolve and wind up the affairs of the League, and they recommend that course to the Council. 2. That in view of future possible political events this committee recommends the appointment of a Vigilance Committee of nine members, with power at any political crisis to call together the advanced reformers of London, and to elicit the public opinion of the country upon the question then before the people."

After reading that part of the proceedings of the terminal meeting, it is not a little curious to learn that the chairman's chair was then voted to the president, and the writing-desk to the secretary, and the meeting dissolved. There is a simplicity in this which reminds one of Sparta.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY seems to have passed off without any serious amount of broken heads. An extra quantity of whisky and consequent hilarity, with a few scrimmages, which those itinerant magistrates, the police, for the most part settled, were the only signs among the metropolitan Irish labourers and their belongings. At Cork there was a *soirée*, at which several of the released Fenian prisoners attended and made warm speeches, which began and ended in the midst of nothing less objectionable than "unbounded enthusiasm." At St. James's Hall, the less politically inclined were drawn together by the excellent attractions of Miss Berry-Greening's Irish Ballad Concert. This lady charmingly sang several well-known airs, and was ably supported by several popular performers. The crowded audience received Moore's melodies with rapturous delight, and at times it was difficult to decide which gained the honours of the numerous encores, the sentiments embodied in the words, or the finished execution of the singers. For a good humoured lively audience commend us to one on a St. Patrick's evening listening to Irish airs.

HER MAJESTY the Queen has just received an interesting bequest from the late Lord Belhaven, consisting of the following valuable curiosities:—Relic No. 1 consists of a cabinet of Mary Queen of Scots, made of ebony, richly ornamented in front with designs in tortoiseshell, height 5 feet 2 inches, width 4 feet 2 inches, depth 1 foot 9 inches. The front opens

with folding doors. In the centre also are two small folding doors, which, on being opened, reveal a small recess, with tessellated pavement and roof with side mirrors. The inner folding-doors are also surrounded with drawers. The Scottish queen brought this cabinet with her from France on her return to Scotland to begin her eventful career. This souvenir of the ill-fated Mary must therefore be some 300 years old, but it is in wonderfully good preservation. Queen Mary presented it to the Earl of Mar. The Earl afterwards made a gift of it to a favourite granddaughter, who married one of the ancestors of the late Lord Belhaven, and the cabinet has continued in the possession of the Belhaven family ever since. Relic No. 2 is a purse (the work of Queen Mary's own hands), beautifully wrought with a crown, sceptre, and sword, in gold, with the words "God save King James." Relic No. 3 is a piece of unleavened bread, to which no authentic history is attached, but traditionally understood to have been a fragment of what Queen Mary had used when participating in the most solemn rite of her religion. There is also a lock of Mary's hair, which is of a light colour. The original letter addressed by the late Lord Belhaven, placing these interesting souvenirs at the disposal of the Queen, was locked up in one of the drawers of the cabinet.

THE *Owl* of this week publishes the following scraps of information:—"It is not generally known that the true crown of King Theodore of Abyssinia was bought at the capture of Magdala, from a common soldier, by Herr von Rolffs, a Prussian officer attached to the expedition, and was by him presented to King William. His Majesty, having had his attention drawn to Lord Napier's order forbidding the sale of articles taken by the army, has now forwarded the trophy to this country. It has just arrived here, and will find a more appropriate home than in a Berlin museum.—Sir John Lawrence received his education at Foyle College, in the north of Ireland, and on his elevation to the peerage proposes to take the title of 'Foyle.' It is believed that the ex-Governor-General of India will be created a viscount."

WE understand from the *Times* that the shareholders of the Hudson's Bay Company will meet on the 24th inst., to consider Lord Granville's proposal for the transference of the Hudson's Bay territory to the Dominion of Canada. Lord Granville proposes that the company shall surrender to her Majesty all their rights of government, property, &c., in Rupert's Land and other parts of British North America, which will be transferred to the Dominion of Canada upon Canada paying the company £300,000, in compensation for their territory and rights. It is proposed that the company shall retain their rights of trade, their stations, and blocks of land adjoining them; and they shall, moreover, be allowed to claim one-twentieth of the land in every township or district within what is called the Fertile Belt, as it is set out for settlement. As this announcement has brought about a considerable fall in the price of the shares of this company, it would appear that the shareholders look upon the scheme as unfavourable to their interests, and so may reject it.

WE commend to the notice of the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education the following advertisement:—

"GRAMMAR SCHOOL, W.—E.—Wanted immediately, a Second Assistant Master, to teach thoroughly writing and arithmetic, also junior English subjects. Must be a good cricketer and round-arm bowler. Character to bear the strictest investigation. Salary £40, increasing to £60."

THE lovers of hunting throughout the country will be greatly shocked at reading of the dastardly and malicious circumstances which have put a stop for the present to the sport in the North Cotswolds, which has hitherto been so highly appreciated by all who have had the good fortune to hunt with Lord Coventry's hounds. The event to which we refer is thus described by an eye-witness:—

"Lord Coventry's hounds met at Hilcote stone-quarries, when there was a good muster of the right sort, including Lord Coventry, Mr. A. Rushout, Captain Wright, Messrs. J. J. Wilson, W. Wilson (Ilmington), &c., and a good sprinkling of ladies. Stoke Wood was drawn blank, and the hounds were proceeding towards Meon Hill, when, drawing through Ticket Coppice, on Mr. Corbett Holland Corbett's estate, at Admington, they came upon what was afterwards found to be a poisoned rabbit, which they began eating; they, however, did not go much further before three of the pack dropped dead. The names of the three were Liberty (for whom his lordship stated

he would not have accepted 100 guineas, as she was the best he ever saw), Conqueror, and Conquest. There was, of course, great excitement and much sympathy expressed for Lord Coventry, who was much hurt at seeing some of his favourite hounds lying dead before him, notwithstanding every effort had been made by drenching them with salt water and applying other restoratives to save them. Of course, after this the field soon broke up, and the hounds returned home. One of the dead hounds and part of the rabbit have been sent to London to be analyzed. Close to the remains of the poisoned rabbit a dead fox was discovered, which the huntsman (Squires) said could not have been dead ten hours. Considerable excitement and indignation has been occasioned in the neighbourhood in which the affair has happened, and it is stated the matter will be made the subject of the strictest investigation."

We shall be glad to learn that the perpetrator has been discovered and suitably punished.

WHEN will the poor cease to eat saveloys, sausages, and that horrible compound known as "faggots"? One would have thought the disclosures which have been made over and over again of the mysterious meat employed in this manufacture would have long since ruined the business, but, in spite of all these, the trade continues to flourish. The most recent case, and it is one to which the police in the metropolis ought to know where to seek for a parallel, comes from Yorkshire. A butcher was recently detected removing from a knacker's premises a sack full of dainty morsels of horseflesh, which he intended to "work up" into "polonies." Having been brought before the magistrates at Hull, he declared he purchased the meat for beef; but this the knacker denied, and blurted out the statement that he held a commission to supply the "polony" man with three dead horses per week, and that once he added to the bargain a large dead dog. Of course he was committed for trial; but why not feed him in the meanwhile on his own "polonies"?

SINCE the Civil Service candidate obtained a place in the annals of his country's history by spelling "coffee" without a single letter correct, "kawphy," mistakes in orthography have been looked upon less favourably than formerly; but our hero's successors are yet very far from having conquered the mysteries of spelling. It may be gratifying to some to learn that ours is not the only country in the world that has neglected spelling. The story is from an American source, and so we have our doubts about its genuineness; but it will serve its purpose as well as any other. We are told that not one out of thirty-eight teachers belonging to the Connecticut Teachers' Institute was able to win the prize that was offered to any who could write and spell correctly the following sentence:—

"It is an agreeable sight to witness the unparalleled embarrassment of a harassed pedler attempting to gauge the symmetry of a peeled onion, which a sibyl has stabbed with a poniard, regardless of the innuendoes of the lilies of cornelian hue."

One would be glad to examine the same exercise from say half a dozen each of clergymen, officers in the army, M.P.'s, teachers, civil servants, and City aldermen, taken at random.

ONE "Steeple Jack" is no sooner killed than another takes his place, and aspires to even more daring honours. The last we read of is a James Goodchild, a Scotchman, who has been engaged attaching lightning conductors to the tower and gables of the hydropathic establishment at Crieff. The tower is about 100 feet high, and the flagstaff thereon is 40 feet. At this height—some 140 feet—"Jack" thought proper to balance himself with one foot resting on the top of the flagstaff. Here he stood till his photograph was taken, and thereafter waved his cap while the flagstaff was swinging in the breeze. A number of people saw the daring feat, but while witnessing it their terror was much greater than their pleasure. Where are the caterers for novelty in public amusements that they do not instantly secure this daring fellow as a rival to Blondin? Till he broke his neck he might be worth several pounds a week to those who could induce him to appear in tights and spangles.

CONSOLS are now at 92½ to 93 for money, and 93 to 93½ for the account. There has been little change in foreign securities. Spanish stock has slightly improved. Business in the railway market has been restricted, at prices exhibiting a general tendency to decline. An animated business has been done in Colonial Government securities, at firm prices. Joint-stock bank shares have only been slightly inquired for at steady quotations. The mining share market has exhibited great activity, at rising prices. Miscellaneous and finance shares

offer no noteworthy change. The Stock Exchange Committee have appointed Tuesday, the 23rd inst., a special settling day in the shares of the British-Indian Submarine Telegraph Company. Official quotation is refused, a proportion of shares beyond the Stock Exchange requirements having been reserved for contractors and others. The report of the Italian Treasury up to the 28th of February has been published at Florence. According to this report, the national revenue amounted to 1,733,380,863 lire, and the expenditure to 1,605,326,101 lire, and the cash and notes in the Treasury to 127,854,762 lire. The report of the National Bank of India (Limited) shows an available total of £19,961, including a previous balance of £1,069, and recommends a dividend at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum, and the appropriation of £3,000 to reserve, leaving £3,045 to be carried forward. The deposits held amount to £1,045,808, an increase of £336,240 during the year; the paid-up capital is £463,850; and the reserve fund, £38,000. A half-yearly dividend and bonus, at the rate together of 10 per cent. per annum, free of Income-tax, have been this day declared by the directors of the Bank of Australasia on the capital stock (£1,200,000), payable on the 13th of April. The directors of the Caledonian Railway have announced a dividend for the half-year at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, against $2\frac{1}{2}$ for the corresponding period of 1867.

MESSRS. HERRIES & Co. and Messrs. Robarts, Lubbock, & Co. have notified that they will receive subscriptions for an issue of £400,000 7 per cent. mortgage bonds of the Trouville Association (Limited), secured by a property at Trouville-sur-Mer, in Normandy, which it is proposed to develop by the erection of houses and the disposal of building lots. The debentures are to be of £10 each, redeemable in about seven years, with a bonus of 20 per cent., and a share in any surplus profits of the estate. The prospectus of the Braganza Gold-Mining Company (Limited) is issued, with a proposed capital of £50,000 in £1 shares. The object is to purchase and work the Morro Tabac Freehold Gold Mine, situated close to Itabira do Campo, in Brazil. For the purchase of the freehold and the buildings thereon the company are to pay £6,000 in cash and £4,000 in paid-up shares—in addition to a further sum of £6,000 in cash, payable when the shareholders shall have received a dividend of 10 per cent. At a meeting of the Lancashire Insurance Company at Manchester, it was stated that the income from fire premiums was £112,579; from life premiums, £39,527; and from interest, £16,635; and that the fire losses paid during the year amounted to £45,350, and the life claims to £15,978. A dividend of 10 per cent. was declared, and the reserve funds were reported to be £169,330 in the life department, and £62,350 in the fire branch. The Bristol Marine Insurance Company, started in 1864, has amalgamated with the United Ports and General Insurance Company, of 17 & 18, Cornhill, and the latter has opened a branch office in Bristol for the conduct of its business in the west of England.

THE report of Reuter's Telegram Company (Limited) shows an available total of £31,939, including £337 brought from the last account. Out of this sum an interim dividend of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. has already been paid, and the directors now declare a further dividend of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., making a total for the year of 10 per cent. This will absorb £21,710, and, after adding £1,000 to the reserve fund, writing off £986, the entire balance of the preliminary expenses, and £7,171, being half of the special account for the establishment of new offices abroad, there will remain a balance of £807. The City Offices Company (Limited), in anticipation of the arrival at maturity on the 1st of July next of £300,000 of mortgage debentures, have, as appears from a circular just issued to the shareholders, decided to pay off £100,000 of the present mortgage debt, and to issue new mortgage debentures for £200,000, for a period of five years, bearing 5 per cent. interest. The first option of subscribing is offered to the present debenture-holders and shareholders. At the meeting of the shareholders of the Surrey Commercial Dock Company a dividend of 3 per cent., free of Income-tax, was declared for the past six months. The report of the Cagliari Gas and Water Company (Limited) intimates that the usual sum of £150 had been added to the sinking fund for the water-works concession, and the directors recommend that a dividend at the rate of 7 per cent. on the capital subscribed be declared for the past half-year. This, with the interim dividend paid in October last, will absorb £5,904, leaving a balance of £1,817 to be carried to next account. At the meeting of the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Land Company the directors' report

was adopted, and a dividend of 15s. per cent. declared. The sales of land during last year amounted to 2,515 acres, which is much below the average, while the receipts for lumber were £1,487 currency, being nearly the average of the last seven years.

MEMORANDA.

THIS evening being the closing night of the Drury Lane season, the performance will be, according to custom, for the benefit of the lessee, Mr. F. B. Chatterton. The play will be "Macbeth," with Mr. Charles Dillon as the Thane of Cawdor (for this night only), Mrs. Howard Paul as Lady Macbeth and Hecate, Miss Poole as first singing witch, Mr. Thomas King, Macduff. This will be preceded by "The Girls of the Period," and followed by the ballet of "Beda."

Mr. Charles Dickens has just entered upon his last course of six readings. We shall be glad to learn that the great success which has attended the readings has induced him to alter his intention of retiring from public life.

Mr. and Mrs. German Reed have closed the Royal Gallery of Illustration until Easter Monday, in order to prepare an entirely new entertainment, in which will be produced two novelties—one from the pen of W. S. Gilbert, entitled "No Cards;" and the other a new triumphetta, a musical adaptation, entitled "Cox and Box; or, the Long Lost Brothers," by F. C. Burnand and Arthur Sullivan. Mr. Arthur Cecil has joined the company at this popular place of amusement.

Mr. T. C. King, an actor of provincial celebrity, has made his appearance, with marked success, in the metropolis at Drury Lane, in the character of Richelieu. He is accompanied by his daughter, Miss Bessy King, whose graceful rendering of the part of Julie de Mortemar was likewise favourably received.

The Marquise de Caux (Adelina Patti) has been singing at St. Petersburg for the poor. The proceeds of the concert amounted to nearly two thousand pounds sterling. She sings three nights a week at the Opera, and during the day may be often seen in company with the Emperor and the Grand Duke Vladimir.

The precise date of the next triennial musical festival at Norwich (which will take place this year) has not yet been fixed, but the festival will probably commence about the 20th of September. Mr. Benedict, who will probably prepare some composition expressly for the festival, will again act as conductor. Some progress has been made with the guarantee fund, which has reached a total of nearly £4,000.

Berlioz has left his manuscripts to the Conservatoire, to M. Alexandre his batons as leader of orchestras, and the printed impression of his operas to his editor, M. Damcke.

M. Félicien David has been appointed librarian to the Imperial Conservatoire of Music, in the place of the late M. Berlioz.

The Paris correspondent of the *Star* thus describes the last reception at Gustave Doré's:—"Amongst the notabilities were Countess Pepoli (Alboni), M. Roger, the tenor, Marquis d'Aoust, Mr. W. Gladstone, M. Lefort, well known as a singer in London drawing-rooms, &c. We had a duet of marvellous beauty on the organ and piano, executed by St. Saens and Widor, the latter being a young German composer and organist of immense talent. The *atelier*, as usual, was lighted a *giorno*. Were I to describe the two *chef d'œuvres* fresh from the easel of our host, which had been transported from Rue Bayard for our criticisms, I should commit an indiscretion, as both have been selected by Count Nieuerkerque for the exhibition, which, as you are aware, opens on the 1st of May, as usual, at the Palais d'Industrie. We are to have a splendid Alpine landscape, by François, and I hear that Daubigny will be remarkably well represented. Gustave Doré's great picture, 'Christ descending the steps of the Judgment Hall,' although far advanced, will not be ready for another year."

The copyright of Rossini's "Messe Solennelle" has been sold to Messrs. Chappell for England; for France, to M. Brandus; for Italy, to M. Uhlman.

Professor Lyon Playfair, M.P., has intimated to the curators of the University of Edinburgh his intention of resigning at the end of the present session the chair of chemistry. There are already a number of candidates for the professorship.

The subject for the Prize Essay of the Cobden Club for the year 1869 is the following:—"Free Trade in its Relation to the Colonies and Dependencies of Great Britain." The essays are to be sent in to the honorary secretary, Mr. Thomas Bayley Potter, M.P., Reform Club, London, before the 1st of January, 1870, and are not to exceed in length fifty pages of the *Quarterly* or *North American Reviews*. The committee reserves to itself the privilege of publishing the successful essay.

Professor Morley is at work on the continuation of his useful "Tables of English Literature," which show at a glance all the contemporary authors, and all the books of note published, in any year.

We learn from the American papers that Mr. Charles Reade's action for libel against the *New York Round Table* has terminated in a verdict for the novelist, with six cents damages.

The death is reported of Mr. Henry Cooke, the founder of the *Oxford Chronicle* and *Berks and Bucks Gazette*.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* thus relates the story of the Arabic Manuscripts:—"The discovery of the Arabic MSS. about which there have been so many mysterious hints, happened, we are told,

in this wise. Last winter Mr. Hassoun, a Syrian gentleman, having obtained permission to make some researches in the library of the India Office, was introduced by Dr. Hall, the librarian, to a large quantity of papers in Arabic, which had been kept nailed up in boxes in the old India Office for some forty-five years. No one knew how they came there, and although they had been unpacked when removed to Westminster, they had never been deciphered. An arrangement was made that Mr. Hassoun should receive a small payment for examining the documents, and it is now said that some of them are very valuable. There are about 450 volumes in all. Whether the whole of them came from Timour's library is not known, but some of them have the 'seal of the library of Sultan Timour' stamped upon them. Mr. Hassoun is now engaged in making out a catalogue of the collection in Arabic, his knowledge of English being very slight. When this is completed we shall be better able to judge of the value of the discovery."

The Worcester Society for Providing Cheap Literature for the Blind will shortly issue, in Roman type, the Book of Proverbs, at the price of 1s. 6d. At a meeting of the committee of the society on Saturday week, at the Worcester guildhall, the subject of arbitration between the advocates of the arbitrary systems and the Roman system was referred to. In the course of conversation, the Bishop of Worcester, who is the president of the society, said, seeing that the Worcester Society had before it the most important illustrations of the truth of their system, he would prefer that the society should go on, produce its books, and do the best it possibly could to advance its position; and Mr. Hatton mentioned, as a proof of the adaptability of the Roman system, that recently one of their (the Worcester Society's) blind adult readers had taught two children to read who were in possession of their sight.

The "Act for Consolidating and Amending the Law of Copyright in Works of Fine Art," as suggested and drawn by Lord Westbury, has been distributed. The principal clauses are as follows:—1. Commencement of the Act, and repeal of existing Acts. 3. Grant of copyright to authors of new and original works of fine art. 4. Authors' studies, MSS., &c., to the extent of £15, not to be liable to seizure or sale during author's life. 5. Illustrations of books to be deemed part thereof. 6. When engravings separately published, proof to be delivered to the British Museum. 7. How copyright may be assigned, &c. 8. No action, &c., maintainable by proprietor of copyright until after registration. 9. Penalties where registered copyright infringed. 10. Various fraudulent acts relating to works of fine art prohibited. 11. Importation of piratical repetitions prohibited as to registered copyright works of fine art. 12. Commissioners of Customs publicly to expose lists of registered copyright works of fine art. 13. Importers, &c., of piratical copies to furnish names, &c., of persons from whom same obtained. 14. Justices of the peace may grant warrants to search for piratical copies for sale. 15. Piratical copies found in possession of hawkers may be seized. 17. How penalties may be summarily recovered before two justices, &c. 19. Penalties imposed not to prejudice other remedies to which proprietor of copyright entitled. 22. Plaintiff or defendant succeeding in action, &c., to have full indemnity for costs, unless otherwise ordered by the court. 29. Not to repeal the Ornamental Designs Act. Clause 4 includes in the exemption an artist's "professional implements" in the cases of "distress for rent, or any execution issued against him to be levied on his goods and chattels;" and "no such sale of the sketches, studies, unfinished works of fine art, or MS. notes (without the author's consent), shall deprive him of copyright therein." Among the Acts which are scheduled with reference to Clause 1 is "Hogarth's Act" (1767).

A monthly paper to be called the *Church Chronicle*, a record of Church life and Church work, will be issued on the 1st of May. It will be edited by Mr. Charles Mackeson, who will also contribute to its pages a series of papers on London and suburban churches.

From "Notes on Foreign Literature," in *Putnam's Magazine*, we learn that the Japanese author, Kioyote Bakin, has at last completed his novel, commenced thirty-eight years ago; it comprises 106 volumes!

Dr. Emanuel Deutsch, the author of the Talmud article in the *Quarterly*, has started for a journey in Palestine and Egypt, connected with his studies on the Talmud. Mr. Murray announces a new and much enlarged monograph on that interesting subject.

We take the following from the *Guardian*:—"On Thursday Messrs. Hodgson, of Chancery-lane, submitted to public auction a quantity of literary property, including some of Mr. Thomas Bosworth's, the publisher of Regent-street, estate. Amongst this was the copyright of the *Church News*, started by Dr. F. G. Lee, as the organ of the Disraelite Ritualists, the actual sale of which was stated by the auctioneer to have been between 4,000 and 5,000 weekly. This valuable property, with fifty sets of the back numbers, elicited a bid of £5. A smart competition then began between, as we understand, Mr. Bosworth himself and an agent of the Church Press Company; but the eloquence of the auctioneer could not raise the price offered beyond £30, at which it was knocked down to the company. The copyright, and blocks of Dr. Lee's edition of the 'Directorium Anglicanum,' together with an impression of the book, fetched £47. A great number of copies of the *Altar Service-books* edited by Dr. F. G. Lee were sold at various prices. One set, splendidly bound in antique morocco, fetched £4; but thirty sets of the small-paper edition went for 4s. though the auctioneer suggested that, by omitting the preface, the work might be made available for use by men of any party."

Mr. Max Müller has been elected a Foreign Associate of the French Academy of Inscriptions, in place of M. Welcker, of Bonn, lately deceased.

Mr. Samuel Mossman, author of "China: its History and Institutions," has just brought out a new work, "The Origin of the Seasons." The subject is considered from a geological point of view, and exhibits the remarkable disparities which exist between the physical geography and natural phenomena of the north and south hemispheres. The Messrs. Blackwood & Sons are the publishers.

M. Renan's new work, "Saint Paul," is nearly finished, and will be published in a few weeks.

The native press is gradually becoming a power in the Sultan's dominions. Three new provincial Turkish journals are about to be published. The Ottoman Government, according to *Public Opinion*, no mean authority on Turkish questions, regularly charges its budget with provincial journals, as part of the means of progress.

The Trinity Board has resolved to supersede the Longships lighthouse off the Land's End by a new structure on an adjoining rock. The contract for the granite work has been taken by a French firm, and all the granite for the work will be imported from France. The picking out of the foundation will commence at once.

The *Bairische Landeszeitung* informs its readers that Mr. J. Albert, the Court photographer in Munich, has made such improvements in the art of copying photographic pictures, by means of the press, as will throw all other processes into the shade. His copies, it is said, cannot be distinguished from originals either in force or softness of tone, and his method is equally applicable to the largest and smallest pictures. It will thus be possible to produce large numbers of copies very quickly, and all danger of their fading in the course of time is obviated.

Mr. Cooper, the traveller who penetrated from Shanghai to Yunnan, but was driven back by the Mandarins, has arrived in Calcutta with the object of approaching Yunnan from the side of India.

The ladies have at last determined to form a club. At present all we learn of the affair is that the entrance-fee is to be ten guineas, and the annual subscription five.

The death of Sir Joseph Oliffe, long and favourably known as an English physician at Paris, is announced. Sir Joseph died at Brighton, whither he had been removed from Paris, in the hope that the air might prove beneficial.

The Duke of Wellington presided, on Wednesday, at the second annual meeting of the Anglo-Belgian Prize Fund, at Mr. Charles Mercier's studio at Albert-gate. The finished engraving by Mr. S. Billin, from Mr. C. Mercier's picture of the King of the Belgians, was laid before the meeting, and an address of condolence to his Majesty on his recent bereavement adopted.

The next meeting of the Zoological Society of London will be held at the society's house in Hanover-square on Thursday, the 8th of April, 1869, when the following communications will be made:—1. "Observations on the *Lepus Americanus*, especially in reference to the modifications in the fur consequent on the rotation of the seasons, and the change of colour on the advent of winter, based on specimens obtained in the province of New Brunswick, North America," by Mr. Francis H. Welch. 2. "Notes on the Habits of the Collared Plain Wanderer (*Pedionomus torquatus*)," by W. Vincent Legge. 3. "Report on a Second Collection of Fishes made at St. Helena by J. C. Mellis, Esq.," by Dr. A. Günther. 4. "Further Contributions to the Ichthyology of Zanzibar," by Lieut.-Colonel R. L. Playfair. 5. "Notes on the Friendship existing between a Malacopterygian Fish (*Premnas aculeatus*) and the *Actinia crassicornis*," by Lieutenant C. C. de Crespigny. 6. "Notes on *Ploceus baya* and its Nests," by Mr. C. Horne. 7. "Notes on the Common Grey Hornbill of India (*Meniceros bicornis*)," by Mr. C. Horne. 8. "Note on the Young Spotted Hyæna," by Dr. J. E. Gray.

The next evening meeting of the Royal Geographical Society will take place on Monday, March 22nd, at 8.30 p.m., at the Royal Institution, Albemarle-street, under the presidency of Sir R. I. Murchison, Bart., when the following papers will be read:—1. "The Swedish North Polar Expedition of 1867, and other Arctic Projects," 2. "Ningpo to Hangchow," by Christopher T. Gardner, Esq.

The next evening meeting of the Geological Society of London will be held on March 24th, when the following communications will be read:—1. "On the Cretaceous Strata of England, France, and Algeria," by M. H. Coquand. Communicated by J. W. Flower, Esq., F.G.S. 2. "On the Structure and Affinities of *Sigillaria* and allied genera," by W. Carruthers, Esq., F.L.S., F.G.S. 3. "On the British Species of the genera *Climacograpsus*, *Diplograpsus*, *Dicranograpsus*, and *Didymograpsus*," by Dr. H. A. Nicholson, F.G.S.

At the next meeting of the Institution of Civil Engineers, which will be held on Tuesday, March 23rd, at 8 p.m., the subject of "American Locomotives and Rolling Stock" will again be brought forward for discussion among the members present.

At the ordinary meeting of the Victoria Institute on Monday evening last, C. Brooke, Esq., M.A., vice-president, in the chair, a paper was read "On the Noachian Deluge," by the Rev. M. Davison. The author stated his reasons for regarding the Deluge to have been local rather than universal; and the subject was freely criticised by the various speakers, most of whom endorsed Mr. Davison's opinion respecting a limited and local flood.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

GRANT'S CAPTURE OF RICHMOND.*

THIS book of battles by John Cannon is a most attracting and exciting one. It is fairly arranged, and fairly written; and although it is by no means the final work on the subject, it is an honest contribution towards a completer and greater history of the great struggle. While professedly dealing only with the last year of the war, the campaign organized and commanded by General Grant for the capture of Richmond, the writer introduces his description of the events of that final effort, with a sharp, rapid review of the battles of the three preceding years, which forms a stirring and stern prelude to the story of that Federal host whose hugely-extended and terrific operations culminated in the destruction of the Southern Confederacy. Although Mr. Cannon never attempts to be brilliant, but writes only a clear, business-like style, the nature of his theme is so picturesque, and carries in itself such a weight of grandeur, that the narrative reads like an Iliad, holding the student transfixed while the stream of events plunge fiercely and redly on to the tragic yet triumphant end. The war is so recent an event, the story of it has been so frequently told, and most readers are so well acquainted with its great features, that it would be superfluous to recount them here. Each year of the war has its special points of absorbing interest. The blunders of Bull Run distinguished the first; the second was corrugated and torn by "half a dozen battles of huge slaughter," and signalized by the first trial in fight of ironclad vessels, and the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation; the third exhibited the thrilling spectacle of Jackson's death at Chancellorsville, the all-important battle of Gettysburg, and the reduction of Vicksburg, and the course of the Mississippi; while "the fourth unfolds events which, after all, seem to be of supreme grandeur—Spottsylvania (the greatest battle of the war), Sherman's march (the greatest war operation), the capture of Richmond, the close of all resistance by the South." Thus the years pass before us through Mr. Cannon's simple narrative in a succession of scenes, packed full with heroic deeds, frightful suffering, and immeasurable death,—each year towering above the other in bewildering heights of slaughter, until at length the utmost peak of intensity is reached with the unutterably sad sacrifice of the gaunt and quaint, but noble and good, old man, who had ruled the nation during its period of vast agony. We shall yet have many narratives and histories of this great civil war; but we doubt whether justice can be done to the surpassingly grand Iliad of its woes until the Homer of America is born to give it the form and utterance of immortal verse. But, till the poetic hour and man have come, we must content ourselves with the good offices of plain prose; and no doubt we shall have one or two great histories on the subject before the destined poet makes his appearance.

But when he does come, what a striking array of heroes he will have with whom to star and make eloquent his song! It may be said, with unusual force and truth, that in the American civil war, as indeed in all patriotic wars, deeds alone made or unmade the men. Stonewall Jackson—true and trusty and tender, impetuous and irresistible—was born and died a hero. McClellan, Young Napoleon as he was thought to be, let procrastination steal his chances, so that he won no Austerlitz, and so acted that his whole career was a species of Waterloo, thus winning only the most dubious renown. Among numerous able commanders on the Southern side, Captain Semmes, the stormy petrel of the Confederacy, obtained an unenviable renown in his dashing cruise in the *Alabama*. Undoubtedly, however, General Robert Lee was by far the noblest and most commanding genius who fought in support of the Rebellion; and upon him and General Grant was at length concentrated the whole interest of the mighty duel. They were heroes worthy of each other's steel. Lee, come of the best blood of Virginia, was wholly unselfish and wholly unstained. Noble and commanding in person, he was chivalrous in spirit and heroic in conduct. Jefferson Davis was truly the instigator of the Rebellion; but the figure he made throughout the war was poor, unattractive, and unlovable, while his disappearance in the catastrophe was undignified in the extreme. On the contrary, General Lee, who entered the field with reluctance, was, if we except Stonewall Jackson, the only man in the Southern ranks who elicited from all quarters the most unalloyed admiration. We like to look at the figure and fame of Lee:—

"In person General Lee is, by all accounts, represented as in appearance and bodily energy a magnificent specimen of a man. Fifty-three summers had, in 1861, silvered his hair; and his profuse beard, whiskers, and moustache endowed him with the venerable appearance of age; but the stiff and upright bearing of his tall and stalwart form and the eagle glance of his bright brown eyes attested that in strength and intellect he was in the very prime of manly power. He was about six feet two inches in height, and is said to have weighed over two hundred pounds, with no 'superfluous flesh.' His face, well cut, at once pleasing and majestic, had in it at times a jovial look, which when evoked seemed exactly suited to it, but in general his manners were grave and reticent. All who visited him were impressed by the antique courtesy of his bearing, combined with an unaffected childlike cordiality, utterly distinct from the assumed complaisance of town-residing men. Camping in the field, General Lee's head-quarters were not surrounded by any of the insignia of rank and official paraphernalia which would invest most European generals of his grade; yet no one approached his presence without a respect to the full as visible, and perhaps more genuine, than has been shown to many princes. General Lee had three sons who speedily entered the Confederate army. Two were cavalry officers, the third—it is said by General Lee's express desire—served for some time as a private soldier. The comparison had already begun to be instituted of General Lee with Washington. His manners as the commander of an army, and in all official respects, do indeed show much resemblance to the 'Father of his Country.' General Lee never gave vent to such expressions of hatred to, or disgust at the Northerners, as very many of his 'fire-eating' subordinates indulged in. He never called them 'the Yankees,' but generally simply 'the enemy.' On one occasion he passed by his son serving as a private during an engagement, who gave an affectionate shout. 'That's right, my son,' said the general; 'keep those people back.'"

We have said that Lee entered the field with reluctance, we may add that he resigned his position in the army of the United States with something more than reluctance—with grief and regret. Witness the two following letters, which are worth reproduction, the first addressed to General Scott, and the second to his sister residing in the North:—

"Arlington, Virginia, April 20, 1861.

"GENERAL,—Since my interview with you on the 18th instant I have felt that I ought not longer to retain my commission in the army. I therefore tender my resignation, which I request you will recommend for acceptance. It would have been presented at once but for the struggle it has cost me to separate myself from a service to which I have devoted all the best years of my life and all the ability I possessed.

"During the whole of that time, more than a quarter of a century, I have experienced nothing but kindness from my superiors and the most cordial friendship from my comrades. To no one, General, have I been as much indebted as to yourself, for uniform kindness and consideration, and it has always been my ardent desire to merit your approbation. I shall carry to the grave the most grateful recollections of your kind consideration, and your name and fame will ever be dear to me.

"Save in defence of my native State I never again desire to draw my sword. Be pleased to accept my most earnest wishes for the continuance of your happiness and prosperity, and believe me, most truly yours,

"R. E. LEE.
Lieutenant-General Winfield Scott,
Commanding United States Army."

"Arlington, Virginia, April 20, 1861.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—I am grieved at my inability to see you. . . . I have been waiting 'for a more convenient season,' which has brought to many before me deep and lasting regret. Now we are in a state of war which will yield to nothing. The whole South is in a state of revolution, into which Virginia, after a long struggle, has been drawn; and though I recognise no necessity for this state of things, and would have forborne and pleaded to the end for redress of grievances, real or supposed, yet in my own person I had to meet the question whether I should take part against my native State. With all my devotion to the Union, and the feeling of loyalty and duty of an American citizen, I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home. I have therefore resigned my commission in the army, and, save in defence of my native State, with the sincere hope that my poor services may never be needed, I hope I may never be called on to draw my sword.

"I know you will blame me, but you must think as kindly of me as you can, and believe that I have endeavoured to do what I thought right. To show you the feeling and struggle it has cost me, I send a copy of my letter to General Scott, which accompanied my letter of resignation. I have no time for more. . . . May God guard and protect you and yours, and shower upon you every blessing, is the prayer of your devoted brother,
R. E. LEE."

Of the generals intrusted with the command of the Union forces during the first three years of the struggle, all were brave, many were able and brave, but not one possessed in himself the skill to cope permanently with Lee, while some of them were rash, some foolish, and one or two vain and vulgar. Every Northern defeat displayed the inefficiency of some general to hold supreme command. McClellan, Hooker, Burnside, went down like lay-figures. They were good seconds, but bad firsts. Meade, the hero of Gettysburg, alone exhibited something like the genius of a first-rate general. At length, however, the unmistakable proofs of a really great general slowly revealed themselves in the person of Ulysses Simpson Grant, who was

* History of Grant's Campaign for the Capture of Richmond. (1864—1865.) With an Outline of the Previous Course of the American Civil War. By John Cannon. London: Longmans, Green, & Co.

destined to give a glorious termination to the rebellion. The family to which he belongs, "is of Scotch extraction, but has long been settled in the United States, dating as American from the early part of the eighteenth century." He was born in 1822, was trained to the military profession at West Point, and had some active service in Mexico. In the piping times of peace, however, he seems to have fallen into the soldier's vice of drinking, which occasioned his leaving the army. Characteristically enough, Grant became a total abstainer though he has remained an inveterate smoker, sticking to his pledge and his cigar with the tenacity of a great general. Of course, when the war broke out, he soon found congenial employment, getting at first, however, only the command of volunteers. Having won his spurs at Fort Donelson, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga, he was then acknowledged as the foremost soldier of the Union army, in proof of which President Lincoln appointed him to the supreme command—Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant, under which title he took command of the Army of the Potomac, fought with Lee a series of the most gigantic battles, overcame at length his chivalrous opponent, and so was the means of crushing the rebellion and restoring the Union, over which he now rules as President, a well-won and well-deserved honour, and what we are sure will turn out to be an ably and honourably used responsibility. Grant is noted as only a middle-sized man, but with well-defined features, and especially as possessing a square-set jaw, indicative of power and invincible determination. Having the inestimable secret of silence, he is consequently a great economist in the use of words. He is a splendid keeper of his own counsel; seldom talks, and only when he must. After narrating the great series of operations which resulted in the capture of Vicksburg, Mr. Cannon says:—

"During the six months whose events we have been narrating, the citizens of the Union had watched with unceasing interest, chequered by anxiety or satisfaction at each reverse or success, the movements of the army of the South-west; and as the siege drew to a close, Grant's reputation grew higher and higher, and the inquiry as to the history, talents, and principles of the successful general, grew more and more urgent. While he lay before Vicksburg he was waited upon by a deputation of politicians from Illinois, who were desirous to learn Grant's opinion upon public affairs, there being at that time much discussion and agitation rife in the States respecting the conduct of the war, and the alleged arbitrary measures of the Government. The wary Ulysses, who listened composedly to their address, while puffing away as usual at his incessant cigar, briefly declined conversation with them, on the ground that he knew nothing of politics. 'There is one subject,' he added, 'with which I am perfectly acquainted, and if you like to talk about that, I am your man.' 'What is that, General?' asked one of the citizens. 'Tanning leather,' replied Grant."

"Again, referring to the time when Grant was getting into the thick of the battles of the Wilderness, the historian relates:—

"Most of the time he was with Meade, on a knoll covered with pines, a little way to the rear of Warren's corps. Occasionally he would mount his horse and gallop off to the point where he saw urgent need of his presence; things adjusted there, he would return with equal speed to his post of supervision. As to his personal bearing, the reader may be amused, if not edified, by the observations of one of the newspaper correspondents with the Army of the Potomac. 'I was near General Grant during that terrible Friday in the Wilderness,' says the reporter of the *New York Times*. 'To all outward appearance he was cool, calm, and unoccupied. The skin is so drawn over his forehead that wrinkles there don't show when he is perplexed, and his beard so hides his mouth that no nervousness betrays there his thoughts. So he sat and whittled, cutting away at his stick with leisurely, measured, meditative strokes, much of the time, but turning his knife and cutting at the end nearest himself whenever word came of any important change in the chances of the battle. Thus he fought the great contest with knife and stick; and,' adds the writer, giving the reins to his fancy, 'when the stick was gone the enemy was beaten.'"

Then followed the battle of giants, when blood was poured out like water and life was flung away as a thing which only became of worth in sacrifice. Sherman executed his great march from Chattanooga to Atlanta, and thence through Georgia to the sea; Sheridan conquered the Shenandoah Valley; Thomas broke Hood to pieces in the West; and then Grant, clasping more and more tightly the Southern host in Petersburg, it broke and fled, and with it the Confederacy was shaken into its original elements by persistently good generalship and by sheer force of crushing. The end having come, Lee and Grant met to settle the terms of the surrender. We give a few bits:—

"The Federal officers had become imbued with a deep feeling of respect and sympathy for the lion-like foe whom they had at last hunted down. Sitting round the camp fire a night or two before, Grant himself had intimated to his staff-officers the easy terms and courteous treatment he proposed to give to all surrendering rebels, men and chiefs. 'Though rebels, they were Americans, and his object was to restore them to the Union, not to degrade them.'"

"When Grant went in, General Lee was sitting in the parlour—a square room, carpeted, furnished with a sofa and centre table. Lee was 'got up,' as usual, with scrupulous nicety, in a new Confederate uniform, with high riding boots, and with a beautiful presentation sword by his side. It was only on State occasions that he made a habit of wearing a sword. General Grant presented somewhat of a contrast to Lee. He wore a 'sugar-loaf' hat, almost peculiar to himself, a plain blue frock, unbuttoned and splashed with mud, but bearing the three silver stars on his shoulders, the insignia of his rank of lieutenant-general; dark blue pantaloons tucked into his boots, and no sword.

"Saluting cordially, the two generals were not long in proceeding to business. General Grant first apologized for not wearing his sword. In the hurry of the morning's work he had left it in the rear with his baggage."

The liberal terms granted to Lee were then formally drawn out and signed:—

"During the whole interview General Lee appeared calm and contemplative, to a degree bordering on taciturnity, yet without the least air of reserve or mortification. After signing his letter, he remarked to Grant, in a suggestive tone, 'Most of my cavalry men own their horses.'"

"I think that the horses must be turned over to the United States," said Grant.

"I coincide in that opinion," was Lee's rejoinder.

"But," said General Grant, "I will instruct the officers who are appointed to carry out the capitulation to allow those who own horses to take them home. They will need them to do their spring ploughing, and to till their farms."

"Allow me to express my thanks for such consideration and generosity on your part," said General Lee, with emotion. "It cannot fail of having a good effect."

The two generals then arranged that each soldier of Lee's army should be given a certificate of parole, to prevent any inconvenience happening to them, from Federal or Confederate authorities, as they travelled towards their homes.

Finally, as he was about to take leave of Grant, General Lee remarked, "My army is short of rations, and I have a few hundred prisoners of yours."

General Sheridan spoke up: "I have rations for 25,000 men;" and General Grant immediately gave an order to supply Lee's whole army with such a meal as the men had not had for days.

Thus terminated this remarkable interview—a bright page in American history, and honourable in the extreme to General Grant.

General Lee passed out of the house first, and from the verandah (where the expectant Federal officers were waiting) signalled to his orderly to bridle his horse. "Whilst this was being done," says the staff-officer with Sheridan, who has furnished us with his very interesting experience, "whilst this was being done, he stood on the lowest step of the piazza (we had all risen respectfully as he passed down), and, looking over into the valley towards his army, smote his hands together several times in an absent sort of way, utterly unconscious of the people about him, and seeming to see nothing till his horse was led in front of him. As he stood there he appeared to be about sixty years of age, a tall, soldierly figure of a man, with a full grey beard, a new suit of grey clothes, a high felt hat with a cord, long buckskin gauntlets, high riding-boots, and a beautiful sword. He was all that our fancy had painted him, and he had the sympathy of us all as he rode away." General Grant came out a few minutes after General Lee, just in time to exchange a second parting salute. This singular conqueror exhibited no change of countenance or manner; not a muscle of his face seemed relaxed, and no one could have guessed by observing him that an event of extraordinarily joyful character had just been accomplished.

"When General Lee returned to his own lines, his men crowded round him with frantic demonstrations of sympathy and affection. 'Men,' he said, 'we have fought through the war together. I have done the best I could for you.'"

In his report, made about a hundred days after the surrender of Lee, General Grant thus alludes to the supreme results obtained by it:—

"General Lee's great influence throughout the whole South caused his example to be followed, and to-day the result is that the armies lately under his leadership are at their homes, desiring peace and quiet, and their arms are in the hands of our ordnance officers."

In an epilogue Mr. Cannon relates the manner of the assassination of President Lincoln. We might add to that something about the somewhat inglorious figure made by Andrew Johnson as Lincoln's successor; but we prefer saying in conclusion that, in electing Grant as President, the United States have made the greatest and most honourable choice in their power.

CHAUCER'S ENGLAND.*

THIS is, in all respects, a very singular work. One is no less surprised than gratified to meet a writer who has at once the frank audacity and the skill to take up materials which time and tradition have almost rendered sacred, and, by the admixture of personal opinion, odd suggestion, and intelligent and far-reaching comparison, to create out of these a thoroughly fresh and entertaining book. It would be hard to name anything which is not in this picture of "Chaucer's

* Chaucer's England. By Matthew Browne. Two vols. London: Hurst & Blackett.

England"—except dulness. It abounds with passages of the finest and most sensitive literary criticism which we have met with for many a year. It contains historical parallels in which the writer shows the rare gift of being able to grasp the results of long transitional periods. It has poetry, fiction, antiquarianism, brought in to lend a helping hand in causing a certain time in the history of England to thrill with life and colour. Indeed, as we have already hinted, the book deals with Chaucer's England, *plus* Matthew Browne. Whenever some stately pageant, or some humorous show comes before us, we are conscious at the same moment of the presence at our elbow of an acute and intelligent observer, who explains, and points out, and compares. Instead of this book upon the England of Chaucer's time being, as it might have been, a laborious and well-meant compilation of curious memoranda—a bundle of antiquarian rags and tatters, very curious, but not very inviting—it is a series of illustrations, full of minute accuracy and information, and yet lambent with the picturesque glow and colour of the writer's imagination. For instance, we are not in the habit of having the influence of worldly reminiscences upon the mind of "a chronicling old monk" described in this fashion:—

"So long as the house of the religious recluse was a centre of hospitality, and a sanctuary in times of violence, the monks must have possessed a considerable knowledge of the outer world, and then, being debarred from any share in its activities, they would naturally enough become their chroniclers and commentators. It is impossible, try as we may, to make real to the mind the feelings of a religious recluse with respect to the outer world, in a day when the lines of demarcation between the sacred and the secular were so sharply and decisively drawn; but for a priest of any imagination and moral force, points of contact would be found. Let any man, having given himself up to the spirit of the place, and heard the chanting, and thought himself back a few hundred years as well as he can, stand in the nave of Westminster Abbey, and, under those awful columnar arches, which seem as if they would draw closer and closer every moment, look up at the painted window through which shines the bright afternoon sun. The feeling of the vowed recluse, accustomed to the cell, the cloister, the vigil, and the silence he cannot have; the use and wont he must miss; but he may help his imagination by permitting the long aisle of Gothic arches to do their natural work upon him. Neither the square nor the round arch affects the mind like the pointed, in which the spire is added; and while the lofty point appears as if it might for ever go on rising, the columns and the arch seem as if they might for ever draw closer and closer around and over the man who stands below and looks upwards. In the distance, indeed, the movement of approach seems already begun—there is motion in these arches—a stifling sense of being shut in comes over me as I stand. Suddenly I lift my eyes to the stained window, and what is the effect? All the outer world seems to come in and descend upon me, through the bright colour and the shining that will not be shut out. The plumed knight goes cantering by, with the light on his corselet; the fair lady on her ambling palfrey, with her peaked head-gear and blue velvet bodice; the statesman, the citizen, the labourer, the poor man's wife, the motley of the streets; the king's pleasure-barge, the swans, and the wherry boat on the river; the Tower, and the markets, and the bordering fields; the young men and the maidens, the old and the mature, who are yet full of life, the husbandman with the flail, the churl in the stocks, the magistrate on the seat of justice—the world I have quitted for my cloister pours in upon me like motes in a shaft of suggestion; and for me to write a chronicle will be as natural as for Crusoe to notch his stick."

For the reasons suggested above, we prefer the first of these volumes to the second. The first deals more with Chaucer and his writings, illustrating them as chance requires by descriptions of their surroundings; but the second volume, dealing more particularly with these surroundings themselves, is necessarily more of a compilation. Very interesting the compilation is, the author having evidently spared no pains in making his book a trustworthy reflex of Chaucer's times. "If the plan of this book," says Mr. Matthew Browne, in a post-script, "had been different, my own taste and my own notion of what ought to be interesting would have led me to compose it entirely of extracts, with a very few brief explanatory comments." We are very glad that Mr. Browne was not allowed to follow out this notion. Anybody can make extracts; and there are always a large number of people engaged in so manufacturing books. But that they are interesting, except to people who can again make use of the raw material thus raked together, we are inclined to doubt. The particular excellence of the present work lies in the very fact that the antiquarian jottings about "Chaucer's England," which are more or less familiar to cultivated readers, have here found a translator and exponent capable of so transfusing into them his own personal feeling, and lending to them the light of his own interpretation, that, instead of a "Manual of Dates," we have a series of bright and interesting essays which would be delightful even if they were founded on fiction. Here, for instance, is a passage upon hawking, which is surely very different in style from the work of the "extracter":—

"It was the gun, of course, that at last put an end to hawking. No doubt, shooting with the fowling-piece is a less cruel method of catching birds than catching them by setting birds of prey at them; but it is hard not to regret the charming sport,—

'Only a page that carols unseen,
Fitting your hawks their jesses.'

Was there ever a brighter, freer, more musical suggestion put into a couplet? For two things I have many a time sat in a waking dream and wished myself for a short space in the middle ages. I should like to have the mediæval Christian faith for a day; to sit in a cathedral, join in the service, thrill at the 'Dies Irae,' listen to the tread of the passing worshipper as if he were walking in the very aisles of everlasting fate, and watch, with fear and passion, the face of my dear lady as the light through the painted window slanted over her brow. And I should like to go out hawking with my dear lady, for a morning also. True, my love and I would need to be much more hard-hearted than men and women of gentle nurture in the days of Victoria; but let that pass, for a day only. And let me go forth with her into the open, and trot to the river-side, with the falconers at such a distance that they cannot hear our talk, which is, I need not say, of Lancelot, Sir Iambras, the 'Tale of Troy,' the last tourney (at which I won with my lady's colours on my shoulder), and my own undying passion. Up sweeps the wind, charged with the soft odours of many a travelled mile, and gently buffets my lady's cheek till it is like an apple, 'the side that's next the sun.' We see the river a little ahead. A king-fisher darts up from among the tall rushes. There is a heron, and we mean to have him. Take off the hood, let go the jesses, upsprings the falcon, his bells jingling, and the real sport of the day is begun. If this is not better than going out blazing away with a gun at once noisome and noisy (instead of musical), I have no taste. It is a poor excuse to say that you kill more game with one gun than you could with a whole stand of falcons, and in half the time. There speaks the greedy stomach. Give me the poetry, and you may take the victuals. But it is useless complaining. The argument from cruelty is a good one, and not even for the pleasure of missing Mr. Coles's shop (which so annoys Mr. Matthew Arnold) at the corner, and the pleasure of feeling that I might go out hawking to-morrow, would I wish the king's mews back to Charing-cross."

Graver, but not less beautiful and sympathetic, is the following passage upon "Merry" England:—

"There are, after all, two or three particulars, if no more, in which we may find a suggestion that the England of to-day really and truly is less merry than the England of the middle ages. One obvious consideration is, that the population in general have not the same simple religious faith that they had then. It is easier for a man with a superstition to be merry, than one with a half-faith. There is thus a sense in which a poor Italian peasant may be merrier than a well-to-do Englishman. He can devolve his sins on his confessor, his troubles on his patron saint, and so lay down his cares. Undoubtedly merriment of this order does not accompany a general sense of responsibility, such as it is our aim to cultivate in England now; though, in the time of Chaucer, responsibility was not for churls any more than falconry was. Another obvious point is, that the squalid contrasts of great towns are not favourable to merriment; though they are to drunkenness. And yet another point is, that England is not now a conquering country. War brings mourning, but it brings elation also. The meanest man in the population partakes of the sense of power which a victory brings to a country. Once more, we must take into account, perhaps, the gradual civilisation of the surface of the land, and the removal of the country to a distance from the eyes of so large a number of the people. The return of the spring, the sight of the near meadows, 'painted with delight,' as Shakespeare says, the sights and sounds of harvest-home, were all occasions of common joy to the people in a thousand places where they now miss any such excitements, sweet and wholesome as they were. It may be said, even now, that when the fine days begin, the town pours out its wholesome merriment into the green suburbs, whoever stays within the stony bounds for amusement. The sweethearts, and the boys and girls—all whose hearts overflow with natural gladness—go off into the fields to romp and be gay. If they want any pleasure made for them, it is of a very simple character—a merry go-round is enough; but better is the pleasure they make for themselves at kiss-in-the-ring or leap-frog. It is scarcely possible to doubt that there was more of this spontaneous pleasure-making in the England of the Edwards than there is now. But of course the change in this particular is part of a larger change which lies, we hope, in the path to a greater good. The lightness, of which I speak as a main characteristic, of Chaucer's writings, is long ago gone from our literature, and the other forms of our art do not help us as they ought. When our religion and our art have overtaken the problems set them by the changing conditions of our history, we shall have no reason, even if we now had any reason, to regret Merry England."

We have incidentally mentioned the literary criticism which occurs in this work. The running commentary on Chaucer, which is the backbone of the book, gives occasion for an analysis of the "Canterbury Tales" in particular, which we cannot describe otherwise than as masterly. Matthew Browne's criticism, as he has shown in previous works, is at all times fresh, unconventional, and, in an eminent degree, suggestive; but in the present case the largeness of the topic seems to have called forth a corresponding largeness of sympathy and of effort, which together have produced a most valuable commentary upon Chaucer's writings. It is impossible to give any idea by means of extracts—which would themselves most likely contain copious illustrative extracts from Chaucer—of this comprehensive study of our first great English poet; but the following glimpse may be taken of the style of treatment.

The author is replying to the charge sometimes brought against Chaucer of his having constructed the "Canterbury Tales" in imitation of the "Decameron":—

"Boccaccio makes a number of ladies and gentlemen run away from the plague to a country house, and there among arbours, fountains, birds, and other such pretty things, tell tales to each other, in order that they may forget the misery which the very sunshine they are enjoying at peace lights up not far off. The whole conception is evidently mediæval-Italian—cowardly, romantic, and thin. The treatment is artificial and bald, so far as the framework or 'fable' is concerned. What can be poorer or more theatrical than all this twaddle about the birds, the trees, and the sunshine? It needs not to say that many of the stories have exceeding merit; and some of them, to which Chaucer's tales run parallel, are told with a grace, and above all, with a snaky Italian finesse, which, of course, we do not find in Chaucer. But it is in the framework of his 'Canterbury Tales' that Chaucer is by universal consent at his best. In the first place, an English poet of the fourteenth century did not need to travel far for so very obvious and natural an idea as that of making wayfarers amuse each other by the telling of stories. In the second place, Chaucer's 'fable' is thoroughly English, and widely different from that of the 'Decameron.' Its Englishness we recognise at a glance—the inn, the company, the good fellowship, the common purpose (so different from mere running away or retirement), the straightforward look of the pilgrims in the poet's picture—all this is, I repeat, thoroughly English, and as peculiar to Chaucer as anything English can be."

Considering the immense multitude of facts contained in such a work as the present, we have remarked singularly few errors, and these are of slight consequence. In one place the author quotes Hallam to show that in the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth chimneys were unknown in this country; and that some time later, in certain parts, "the fire was in the midst of the house, or against a hob of clay, while the oxen lived under the same roof." But to find, as the normal condition of cottage-life, a fire in the middle of the earthen floor, with a hole in the roof to let the smoke out, the family bed on one side, and the cattle ranged upon the other, with no partition between, Mr. Browne has only, in these present times, to visit the western isles of Scotland. Elsewhere he remarks on the probable emotions of a modern artist in cookery if asked to prepare for dinner, among other things, a peacock. A visit to Leadenhall Market, at certain seasons of the year, would show our author that the taste for peacock is not quite obsolete; and a practical trial of the bird would further convince him that our ancestors, in eating peacock, showed a sound gastronomic judgment. On the question of porpoise we are not in a position to say anything; while tansy-pudding is offensive in its very name. These, however, are but trifling slips in a work which deals with a profoundly interesting subject, in a manner which is characterized by extreme freshness and intellectual force.

A SCOTCH COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.*

THE ability to write a good biography is one of the rarest of literary gifts, and Professor Smeaton, we are sorry to say, does not possess it. Let it be conceded, however, that the merit of a good biography depends, not wholly upon the writer of it, but greatly on the character of the person written about. In this sense, of course, each person determines to a large extent the nature of his own biography, and, by the force of natural affinity almost selects the kind of person who shall write it, as well as the kind of persons who shall read it. The life of Alexander Thomson of Banchory, a worthy country gentleman, was singularly quiet and uneventful. But the man himself had literary and scientific tastes, was pure, pious, and high principled, and therefore it seems quite natural that the Rev. Professor Smeaton should assume the task of telling the story of the good man's life. Mr. Thomson was a Free Churchman, and as his biographer is a Free Church Professor, the book will, no doubt, circulate widely among Free Church people. It is a good thing to be rich; but speaking in the interests of biography, we must declare, nevertheless, that Mr. Thomson had the inestimable misfortune to be born with the hereditary silver spoon in his mouth. Without fortune, he might by the force of his character have risen much above the respectable level that he attained as an Aberdeenshire country gentleman, whose career was pleasantly diversified and flavoured with literary and scientific pursuits. Heir, however, to a handsome fortune and a beautiful estate, the spur to concentrated endeavour was taken out of his life; and although we cannot honestly say that any one part of it was frittered away or misspent, it has, notwithstanding, a commonplace aspect compared with the pos-

sibilities that seemed to lurk in his character. He was born in June, 1798, and died in May, 1868, within a month of his seventieth year, so that many of the most memorable events of modern times occurred during his lifetime. Had he been so disposed, he might have boasted of a famous ancestry, being, as he was, descended from John Knox, the Scottish Reformer. In the museum at Banchory House is an antique watch, which family tradition describes as having once belonged to Knox, to whom it was "presented by Queen Mary on some occasion when she wished to bestow a mark of royal favour, and gain him over to the measures of the court." In his eighth year Mr. Thomson lost his father, who had studied medicine, though he did not practise it as a profession. "He is remembered," says Professor Smeaton, "as a man devoted to literary and scientific pursuits, with a considerable genius for music, and an enthusiastic love of chemistry." Mr. Thomson's mother was a daughter of Dr. Hamilton, professor of mathematics in Marischal College, Aberdeen, and author of the famous essay on the National Debt. Thus in the young Laird of Banchory met two high tides of intense intellectual influence—one flowing through his father from the national fountain of religious power, John Knox; and the other through his mother, from the purest academic springs. He could hardly escape having strong literary, scientific, and religious leanings. During the course of his education at Aberdeen and Edinburgh he made excellent use of his opportunities, though without making any brilliant display. If not a prize-taker, however, he learned steadily and solidly, and by the time he ceased attending the university he had imbibed more information and knowledge than the general run of students. He loved to learn, and did not fear to toil. Like all minds born in an atmosphere saturated with ideas and articulate with intellectual and academic airs, he inhaled knowledge rather than dragged it in according to the usual mechanical method by which everything is done, because it must, not because it is pleasant. In brief, Mr. Thomson was an excellent specimen of the best type of Scotch country gentlemen, who, although born to fortune, are generally reared as if they had nothing but a good education to expect from their families, and who, when their fortune comes to them, do not squander it, but add to it by careful and improved systems of management, adorning it at the same time by their own intellectual culture.

It is no disparagement to Mr. Thomson's particular gifts to say that in the main they took a useful and practical bent. Indeed, the leading characteristics of the man—the meaning of him, so to speak,—the value of him to his country and to his party, was his clear practical business insight, and the power he had to take the chief bearings of any vexed question of social policy. In politics and religion he was intense but narrow—Conservative in the one, Calvinist in the other, and therefore shortsighted in both. He travelled much on the Continent—in Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy; but although those wanderings had the effect of sharpening and ripening his ideas, they can hardly be said to have broadened or exalted his intellectual character. All that was grand in scenery, beautiful in art, great in literature, striking in religion, or curious in the habits and customs of the people, he admired and studied, and thus increased his stock of facts and impressions; but in mental character he was not himself profoundly touched, mellowed, or modified. Being naturally only to a moderate extent receptive and plastic, he came back from his travels essentially the same Scotch country gentleman—older, indeed, by so many months—more knowing by so many sights and artistic and archaeological investigations—and wiser by so much reading in curious books, dipping into famous manuscripts, and conversation with a few safe Continental professors,—yet still the same well-marked, sharp, intelligent, but somewhat narrow and circumscribed Scottish laird of the best type. He was born in the Church which owed its origin to his great ancestor Knox; and, quite logically of course, he took the popular side in the non-intrusion controversy, throwing in his lot with the Free Church party at the Disruption. This is precisely, we apprehend, what the great reformer himself would have done in any case in which the ecclesiastical suffrages of the people were withheld or threatened with extinction. Inevitably, therefore, and quite appropriately too, the Laird of Banchory was born and died in a state of unspotted orthodoxy; loving the Kirk of his fathers; bating Popery with a sacred ferocity; and holding at long arm's length the motley armies of infidelity, whether in the garb of the naturalist, the geologist, or the rationalist. Professor Smeaton bears testimony to the laird's early orthodoxy in this strange fashion. Having quoted some rather meagre scraps from the young man's diary, the biographer observes, "Here we see religiousness, but no appearance as yet of true conversion;" then, further on, "Not that

* Memoir of Alexander Thomson, of Banchory. By the Rev. George Smeaton, Professor of Exegetical Theology, New College, Edinburgh. Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas.

he was at this time haunted by doubts, or that his mind ever had any affinity to sceptical ideas; on the contrary, he would have been ready, for his own part, at any time to say with Swift, 'Ignorance and vice are two ingredients absolutely necessary in the composition of those you generally call *free-thinkers*, who, in propriety of speech, are no thinkers at all.' Swift is a beautiful figure to bring into the theological witness-box on such a question! Does the Rev. George Smeaton, Professor of Exegetical Theology, New College, Edinburgh, also really believe, as he seems to do, that 'Ignorance and vice are two ingredients absolutely necessary in the composition of those you generally call *free-thinkers*'? Perhaps, after this, we ought not to be surprised to find that the Laird of Banchory was strongly antagonistic to Catholic emancipation. Most Scotch lairds held views similar to those of Mr. Thomson on the Catholic question. Professor Smeaton says:—

"During Mr. Thomson's stay in Italy the Catholic Emancipation Bill, as it was called in England, passed into law. Mr. Thomson never was for a moment deceived by that revolutionary measure, in which both parties of the State concurred. He took its true dimensions from the first. It was proposed and carried out by men who did not know Popery, who breathed a different spirit from the champions of English liberty, Hampden, Milton, Locke, who knew what is meant by granting Papists the function of legislation in a Protestant State. It drew no distinction between the making of laws and the administration of laws, and in its principle overthrew the Protestant constitution of Great Britain. Mr. Thomson held that the inevitable consequence would be, at no distant future, the overthrow of the established religion, and of the Protestant succession to the British Crown. . . . On this point Mr. Thomson never wavered, and never altered his conviction."

These two points, which we have thus indicated, give the measure pretty fairly of this Scottish country gentleman's religious and political creed, which was Calvinistic and Conservative. He loved keenly, and with a sort of Knoxian fervour, the old landmarks in politics and religion, and any change, however just and politic from a broad and wise point of view, seemed to him to carry with it dissolution and destruction. Perhaps we ought not to wonder that similar views appear to be held by Professor Smeaton, although it is deplorable enough to find them entertained by a man with the least pretension to learning, or religious and political experience and insight. A few more of Mr. Thomson's opinions will serve to complete the sketch of his private and specific character. Of one of the most famous of his countrymen he says:—

"Hume's leading principle is, that cause and effect are necessary, antecedent, and consequent. No causation, therefore no power, and therefore no God—this is the legitimate end of Hume's philosophy, whatever he or his friends may say to the contrary. His history is careless in research, violent in politics, and not trustworthy as to facts; still, to this day it is the most readable we have, for the style is admirable, though language often incorrect. His dialogues on natural religion were bequeathed to Adam Smith in MS., with most positive orders to publish them, and a legacy of £200 payable on publication. Smith, to his great honour refused to publish them, and also stopped the publication of all the essays. Baron Hume published them in 1779, then a very young man."

Evidently, the Laird of Banchory would not have been displeased, but very much delighted, had Adam Smith given all Hume's papers to the flames. The laird himself, as he was careful to jot down in his diary, performed a bit of work of a similar kind on one occasion when, in putting his papers and letters in order, he "burnt Channing's works." In the characters of Voltaire and Rousseau, Mr. Thomson of course saw nothing to admire. He says of Voltaire: "View his character in the light of the Gospel, and it will be difficult to find a worse among the polluted sons of Adam. As to Rousseau, he is about as bad as Voltaire. His style is excellent, his matter is miserable; his great characteristic appears to me to be a morbid but deep delight in thinking himself wretched, and in endeavouring to persuade others that he was so, joined to a perfect hatred of everything virtuous or praiseworthy." Cobbett's "History of the Reformation" he calls "a clever web of lies"; and of Lyell's "Geology," "I dislike and disapprove this book exceedingly." Speaking of Arnold's life, which he had read, he notes: "An important work; a very sincere man; many admirable opinions, but some very wrong." Darwin and Buckle of course receive their due. "Finished Darwin: proves nothing: one uninterrupted repetition of a baseless theory, without a fact to stand on;" and of Buckle, "I have now finished the perusal of this work, the most pretentious farago of rubbish I ever read. The worst authorities selected, the best facts misquoted or misapplied, the logic generally *petitio principii*, the whole book the most grovelling materialism and the bitterest enmity against the revealed truth and moral excellence—*Voltaire* his model idol." He praises the literature of Italy as being by far

the best worth studying of all the modern European languages, except our own; but he describes modern French literature as "an utter abomination, not so much *bad* as absolute *inanity*." He comes down upon Newman's "Apologia." "I never tried to read a more intolerable book, or one which more thoroughly revolted all my sympathies—a man of fair abilities deliberately setting to work to reject the simple truths of God's Word, and substituting a *baseless* fabric of his own imagining instead of it, and then calling it a sincere faith, and asking the world to pity him. It is too bad." "'From Matter to Mind,'—a villainous book, if it were not so utterly absurd." "Read 'Frederick II.' What a scoundrel he was, but how clever! quite to Carlyle's taste. Most of the day studying the 'Confession of Faith'; what an admirable compendium!" In a letter to a friend on the vexed question of Ireland, he remarks that "To teach to read without giving the Scriptures to read is only increasing that knowledge which is *power to do evil*. As surely as the nature of man is corrupt, so surely will boys thus taught read bad books in preference to the Word of God, if left to their own choice."

In the same letter he characteristically observes:—

"The greatest evil, I think, that Ireland ever saw was the repeal of the Penal Laws. Don't mistake me, however; I never would have voted for the enactment of them, but, once enacted, I never would have repealed them till they had accomplished their end. I would have modified and softened the practice, but not taken them out of the Statute-Book."

In the first two sentences of the following extract there is a touch of shrewdness, which, however, becomes doubtful in the concluding sentence:—

"The too large estates of many proprietors may appear an absurd evil, but it is to the smallness of the estates in Scotland that I attribute much of its improvement. The lairds were too poor to live but at home, and forced to attend to the improvement of their estates. Might not a modification or abolition of your entails do good in this respect, by allowing the sale of portions of estates to clear incumbrances, and thus raising up a class of small proprietors throughout the country?"

It ought to be added that the Laird of Banchory objected to the opening of penny theatres, and declared in favour of Sabbath observance, holding that "Sabbath-breaking is with many the first step in a life of crime." He acted in Bible and anti-slavery societies. But, in fact, he was engaged in every movement which could possibly benefit the country which he so much adorned. He filled the office of Dean of Faculty in Marischal College; was appointed deputy-lieutenant of the county, and worked conspicuously in establishing the Aberdeen Industrial Feeding-schools, and in bringing about the union of the universities and colleges of Aberdeen. He worked at reclaiming waste lands, and in eighteen years planted 1,200,000 trees. He wrote a book on Italy, various tracts in social science, and some rather able pamphlets on archaeological subjects. He planned a history of Scotland, for which he gathered some materials, but the work was not even commenced. One of the most interesting events of Mr. Thomson's life occurred in 1859, when the British Association met at Aberdeen. The late Prince Consort, who was president on that occasion, honoured Banchory House and the laird of that ilk by selecting it as his place of residence during the meetings of the Association. This incident brought Mr. Thomson and the Royal family into contact, and the friendly relations then began were maintained so long as the good Prince Albert lived, and till the day of the good laird's own death.

Thus, Alexander Thomson, of Banchory, was an eminently useful man in his day and generation—may be said, indeed, to have been a man of learning; and, keeping off certain subjects, he was a man of real intelligence and ability. Of his political and religious views, though not particularly commendable, we can hardly complain. He inherited them, and he stuck to them. The most admirable feature in his life undoubtedly was that he shirked no duty which his position as a country gentleman seemed to impose, and he did many things which some people would regard as supererogatory. What we have to complain of is the memoir of the laird, which is far from being well done. We have the raw material for a good biography, but it is fearfully undigested; and the volume is therefore big and sloppy. The account of the Disruption, for instance, would be interesting in a separate pamphlet; but it is out of place in the sketch of a man who only took a secondary part in the struggle. We can commend Professor Smeaton for an honest intention in writing the biography of his friend, but for the execution of it he cannot be fairly praised.

LUCREZIA BORGIA.*

THE spectacle of a brave man struggling with the character of Lucrezia Borgia, and striving to whitewash its obstinate blackness, is a sight fit for the gods. That Mr. Gilbert has been successful in rehabilitating the Duchess of Ferrara we cannot affirm; but that he has produced a remarkably interesting work is certain. The very boldness of the attempt engages one's admiration and attention; the effort itself, leaving results out of the question, is at least startling. For if there is any character in history about whose guilt ordinary readers have no doubt whatever, that character is Lucrezia Borgia. Writers may have erred about Nero, and Tiberius, and Henry VIII., and Mary Queen of Scots, and Oliver Cromwell; but as for a defence of Lucrezia Borgia, one would almost as soon have expected to see a plea put forward in favour of the private character and disposition of Satan. When Victor Hugo, according to his own confession, pictured in the person of Lucrezia Borgia every species of moral hideousness and deformity, in order to show the white flower of maternity springing out of this slough of crime, he was not conscious of doing Lucrezia Borgia any injustice. Indeed, in replying to any possible objections that might be made to the drama, he remarks that he would say to those who fancied the crimes of the Borgia exaggerated, "Read Tomasi, read Guicciardini, read, above all, the *Diarium*." These, we take it for granted, Mr. Gilbert has read carefully and minutely; and the impression that he has derived from them and kindred authorities is that the Duchess of Ferrara, though not a perfect paragon of virtue, is innocent of the more repulsive crimes laid to her charge. What our impression of Lucrezia Borgia is, after reading Mr. Gilbert's book, may be briefly stated. We never did know much about the character of Lucrezia Borgia—surrounded as that has always been by the floating mists of traditional fiction, popular suspicion, and poetic exaggeration; and now, having attentively considered what Mr. Gilbert has to say, we have come to the conclusion that we know less about it than ever. But it is something to have awakened doubt; and we must leave the Borgia's natural piety—that she was outwardly pious and respectable in the later years of her life is beyond doubt—an open question.

Apart from this main purport, these two volumes contain incidental illustrations and descriptions of the manners and customs of the times of the Borgias which are exceedingly interesting. The story of Lucrezia's life, and of the contemporary incidents which more or less affected her, is no less entertaining, and is told in a graphic and clear style. We should have been glad, however, to have—especially in such passages as refer to the heroine's private character—more explicit and detailed references to the authorities quoted. Such references may not be wanted in a book intended for the amusement of general readers; but, dealing with grave historical matters, Mr. Gilbert should have made greater use of the foot-note. As it is, he gives various valuable quotations from contemporary writers who spoke of the Duchess, her surroundings, and appearance. Had she fair or dark hair? One naturally thinks that she ought to have had raven hair, with an unwholesome face, like that of the common engraving of Boccacio. But Lucrezia had little of the ordinary Italian type of feature and complexion. Her eyes were grey. Her hair was golden, though one or two of her portraits represent her with dark hair. Here is a full-length description of herself and her appearance:—

"At the marriage ceremony she was dressed in an overcoat (*sopra-bito*) of gold tissue (*stoffa d'oro*) made in the French fashion, with open sleeves. Beneath this was a vest of crimson silk bordered with ermine. Around her throat was a necklace of large pearls, from which hung a pendant of precious stones of great value. At the back of her head she wore a cap of dark-coloured silk, shot with gold thread. Her hair, which was drawn back and fell over her shoulders, was merely fastened by a thin black silken cord. She was accompanied by fifteen bridesmaids and many ladies of mature age. Nicolo Cagnolo, who had frequent opportunity of being in Lucrezia's society, speaks of her as being at the time about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age, of middle height and graceful figure, her face somewhat long, her nose Grecian and delicately-shaped, golden hair, grey eyes, a somewhat large mouth with beautiful white teeth, well-formed neck and bust, and the expression of her countenance amiable and lively."

The portrait prefixed to these volumes has anything but a pleasing expression in the features; but as these show the obvious exaggerations of outline that are common to nearly all miniatures, we do not put much value in their suggestions.

That Lucrezia, after becoming Duchess of Ferrara, did do

her best to become outwardly respectable, is, as we say, beyond dispute. Perhaps she had found out that riotous living only left a taste of ashes in the mouth; or perhaps, having no further political schemes, of her own or her relatives, to compass, she imagined that she might as well become proper. Becky Sharp, it will be remembered, was not without a conviction that she could be as good as anybody else if she had only £5,000 a year. However, the Ferrarese court was certainly very circumspect, and the duke and duchess were patterns of respectability:—

"Both Lucrezia and her husband are said to have had a profound respect for things holy, she being fully as strict an observer of all rites and ceremonies of the Church as her husband and father-in-law. On this point historians have frequently done her great injustice, stating that her religion developed itself in proportion as she grew older and found her death approaching. Gibbon even makes the same accusation against her. Yet not a single document exists to give an excuse for the statement, while many might be brought forward to show that, from the first day of her arrival in Ferrara till her death, she followed—though without ostentation—in the strictest manner all outward ordinances of the Church. Judging also from her correspondence, it would be difficult to name any woman of celebrity in the middle ages through whose life a more even current of piety ran than in that of Lucrezia Borgia during the nineteen years of her residence in Ferrara. It is to be perceived as fully in the first letters that she wrote to the Marchioness of Mantua after she had retired from the wedding festivities of Ferrara, as in those she wrote to the same lady shortly before her death—all are marked with the same singular tone of piety. To her father-in-law and husband, even when writing on matters either concerning the State or her private family affairs, the same religious tone may be detected, although never standing forth in an offensive or ostentatious manner."

Nor was Lucrezia's father-in-law anything but a model of virtue, and he had also resolved to make other men as virtuous as himself by edict. The wording of this edict is inexpressibly curious. He ordains that all swearing shall cease, to the end that famines and plagues be averted from the land:—

"His Highness has determined totally to extirpate from the city and the rest of his dominions all the vices, and especially those which create the greatest scandal, and to sow in their place the different virtue, as he hopes to do by the grace of the Holy Ghost. And inasmuch as his Excellency wishes first to put the spade to the root of those vices (*spada alla radice*) which are most likely to produce the anger of God, and induce him in his divine justice, to send upon the earth, famines, earthquakes, plagues, and misfortunes by fire and water, by this present edict, which shall have the force of constitutional law, he commands that no person, of whatever sect or condition, profession or dignity, shall dare or presume to blaspheme God or the most glorious Virgin Mary His mother, or any male or female saint, neither in words clearly expressed or ambiguous, to the extent that if from the doubt of their meaning any blasphemous interpretation may be drawn. And he declares by this edict, that should it not be possible to discover whether the interpretation is blasphemous or otherwise, it shall be esteemed blasphemous. And that his Excellency resolves, that the laws at present imposed upon crimes of the kind shall be put in force in their full severity. And he exhorts all who shall hear any swearing immediately to lay an accusation against the blasphemer, promising the informer that, beyond the merit and reward he will receive from Divine Providence, he will do a public benefit, and moreover he shall have part of whatever fines may be levied."

If you blasphemed God or the Virgin Mary you had to pay six livres; but if you were impertinent to a saint, the fine was only three livres. A notable feature in these punishments was that they were increased in proportion to the rank of the offender. The pious duke doubtless thought that an educated and cultivated person ought to know better; and so a burgher was fined twice as heavily as a working man, and a noble thrice as much. These laws against blasphemers, says Mr. Gilbert, must have continued for a long time in force in Ferrara; for in the middle of the eighteenth century a certain Alberto Romano, having foolishly fired an arquebuss at a statue of the Virgin—a gratuitous waste of powder which was held to be blasphemous—he had his tongue pierced with an iron nail, and was afterwards hanged. Another lord of Ferrara published an edict about women's dresses, being aided in his purpose by a large number of the men of the city.

"Women were prohibited from spending more than a third part of their dowry, either at once or at a future time, on jewels and outfit, rendering it penal for notaries, meisters, tailors, or goldsmiths either to furnish them with goods on credit, or to assist them in evading the laws. All farmers' wives were forbidden to wear silk dresses, or even silk trimmings, or any ornaments of either gold, silver, or pearls. The edict prohibited ladies from wearing to their dresses trains or tails (*code*) which, when a lady stood upright, could be stretched out more than half a yard from her heels. But the most extraordinary portion of Leonella's decree, and at the same time the most objectionable, was the means adopted for discovering whether ladies evaded the law, for although in the public streets the misdemeanours of long tails or trains could be easily detected, it was far different in the house, where they would be able to indulge their extravagant propensities without

* Lucrezia Borgia, Duchess of Ferrara. A Biography. By William Gilbert, Author of "Shirley Hall Asylum." Two vols. London: Hurst & Blackett.

being seen. The plan alluded to was to enable fathers and brothers to give information against their wives and sisters, or daughters, without being detected, so that, without fear of female vengeance, any male member of a family might bring the transgressions of his wife or sisters under the notice of the authorities. For this purpose a box was placed by the entrance door of the cathedral, beside the font for the holy water, with a slit in the lid, into which all denunciations might be inserted against ladies who wore their trains too long, without the names of the informers being known."

To these extracts we can only add the final words in which Mr. Gilbert sums up his opinion of Lucrezia Borgia:—

"In concluding the story of Lucrezia Borgia, and with no wish whatever to speak of her more highly than she deserves, we submit that it is impossible, from the data which we have placed before the reader—all of which are authentic—that Lucrezia could have been the execrable character she has so frequently been painted. That she could have lived for five or six years in the atmosphere of her father's court, and have quitted it without being contaminated, would perhaps be as impossible as for a man to touch pitch and not be defiled. Of those charges of specific acts of gross immorality which have been brought against Lucrezia during her residence in Rome, not the slightest trustworthy evidence exists, nor do her bitterest contemporaneous enemies ever accuse her of being, directly or indirectly, implicated in a murder. And while the strong possibility is admitted that her reputation did not pass without blemish while she resided in Rome, it would be hardly fair to judge her conduct in that profligate age with the same severity we should use in criticising the reputation of a modern princess."

As we have already hinted, we are disposed to leave Lucrezia's real character an open question. It is enough, in the mean time, that Mr. Gilbert has managed to produce such evidence, and such a story, as are likely to unsettle the common conviction of her unqualified and monstrous criminality. Besides this partial attainment of his object, Mr. Gilbert has to congratulate himself on having written a couple of very entertaining volumes, full of curious and interesting matter, over which no reader is likely to yawn.

A LONDON ROMANCE.*

CHARLES DICKENS has much to answer for. When, boldly leaving the beaten track, he sought for his characters, not in the aristocratic saloons of the West-end, but amidst the rookeries of St. Giles's and Saffron-hill, the success which his books met with was due not so much to the persons depicted as to the genius of the artist who contrived, out of such common materials, to produce such wonderful results. But he little thought of the hosts of imitators who would follow in his steps, and who, seeking for the subjects of their tales amongst the lower classes, would imagine that his mantle had fallen upon them, and that some of his glory would also shine upon them. These persons forget that there is nothing intrinsically interesting in the struggling lives, the births, marriages, and deaths of the poor and the mean, that the loves of shopboys and milliners do not necessarily possess elements of romance, and that he who, out of such commonplace material, would construct an enduring book, must possess a certain interpretative genius of no mean order. The result is that most of the imitations of Dickens have been failures. The outward lineaments of his characters have been reproduced, his style has been copied, but there the resemblance has ended.

The book before us forms no exception to this general rule. Although in many parts cleverly written, it is a very poor imitation of the great author, and, like its predecessors of which we have spoken above, is a failure. The outline of the story is as follows:—The hero, James Jarman, is introduced to us as living in a miserable court out of Drury-lane, indebted to the charity of his uncle Whitaker, a carpenter at the neighbouring theatre, for a home. A good boy from his cradle, James suffers the fate of many good boys: he is not only made to suffer for his own shortcomings, but also to bear the sins of others, notably those of his cousins Ann and William. The boys compete at school for a prize, which William sets his heart upon obtaining, but which is awarded to James. The latter, hearing himself accused by his aunt and cousin of having improperly obtained the reward, runs away from home, discovers a fire in a City warehouse, and communicates the fact to the owner, Mr. Hankershanks, who hastens with him to the scene of the conflagration. James is run over by a fire-engine, and taken to the hospital. When recovered he is taken into Hankershank's employment. The description of the proprietor and of the establishment is one of the best in the book. We are now introduced to a clerk named Pickering, a youth senti-

mentally in love with a girl afflicted with a spinal complaint. The course of the lovemaking does not run smooth. Pickering neglects his duties at the office, and is about to lose his situation, when James comes to the rescue and does his work for him after hours. On one of these occasions he stays late into the night, hears a step, and discovers a clerk, Starkey, in the act of attempting to open the safe with a false key. Moved by the culprit's entreaties, James conceals the robbery, and is the next day accused of it by Starkey himself. Mr. Hankershanks, however, steps in, and demonstrates conclusively James's innocence. The honesty and integrity of the hero being so manifest, his employer places the utmost confidence in him, and gives him hints of his intention to place him at the head of the firm. James, notwithstanding, sacrifices his prospects to his friendship for Pickering, who is about to be sent to the West Indies to a branch of the house there; James takes his place, the ship sails and is lost in a storm. Here, as the playbills say, an interval of several years is supposed to have taken place, for in the next chapter James comes back to England with a fortune, to find Whitaker dead and his widow and daughter living in a suburb, and his cousin William become a dissenting minister of fame. Ann is to be married to the said minister, but James, who comes on the scene at the right moment, soon enables Ann to break off the match. Now the tragic part of the story commences. Ann is seduced by a man named Draper under a mock marriage, and, on discovering the fraud, leaves him and goes on the stage. Draper, who believes himself to be dying from an accident, induces her to return to him, and, to make matters straight, a real marriage takes place in his bedroom. A few hours after, hearing her husband say that he did not really love her, Ann leaves the house and goes to the beach, where she is found by James. A few hours after Draper dies, a *post-mortem* examination reveals the presence of poison, suspicion falls on Ann, she is tried and found guilty. The press takes up the case, and the result is that the sentence is reversed. And now James turns out, much to the reader's astonishment, to have been the murderer. The discovery is made by the aforesaid Starkey, the discharged clerk of Hankershanks, who writes to James appointing an interview at the watering-place where the affair had taken place. They meet on the sands, the tide rises, both are swept away by the waves, and in James's pocket is afterwards found his confession, and a will bequeathing his property to Ann.

We have given an outline of the tale, but there is a vast amount of byplay which has no bearing upon the story, and which only serves to make it less intelligible. With the materials before him, the author might have written a far better book. Here and there we come across an amusing passage, as for instance in the description of the amateur theatricals, but there is an utter want of originality about the principal characters, and the scenes are forced and unnatural. We are sorry to have to remark that Mr. Ross has not improved upon his former novel, which was in many respects freshly-treated and promising.

The utmost that can be predicted for the present book is an existence amongst hundreds of its class, upon the shelves of the seaside circulating library.

HORSES.*

EVERY man, or at all events every Englishman, thinks he knows something about horses, and the more ignorant he is the more he affects to know concerning them. Few would admit that they were unable to ride. If very modest as to their abilities, and very truthful as to their want of opportunities, they would probably reply, as the countryman did when asked whether he could play the violin—that he did not know, as he had never tried. Accordingly we are by no means astonished to find a new professor of horsemanship in the "Author of Jurisprudence, &c." The book is founded on a work by M. Baucher, published about thirty-five years ago in France, and, as a treatise on *manège*-riding, is undoubtedly valuable. An outline of the French principles was published by the late Captain Nolan, so well known as a writer on cavalry, and who was the first man to fall in the charge of Balaclava. That Captain Nolan should have interested himself in M. Baucher's treatise said much in its favour as a system of cavalry equitation; but now Mr. March Phillipps produces it as a guide in training horses for the road and for the hunting-field.

The author in his introduction tells us that he has never

* A London Romance. By Charles H. Ross, Author of "The Pretty Widow." Three vols. London: Tinsley.

* Horse and Man. By C. S. March Phillipps. London: Longmans.

seen any book on horsemanship likely to be useful to a beginner, that beginner being a man in the prime of life. There are undoubtedly many amusements difficult to learn after one has passed one's first youth; not difficult only because the body has become less pliable and the nerves more shaken, but because of one's notions of dignity and importance having become developed. A boy never fears to make himself ridiculous by falling, but a middle-aged man would scarcely like to be seen for the first time either on skates or on horseback. This sense of the ludicrous would, we fear, follow Mr. Phillipps's pupil through his lessons, and for this reason it is improbable that they will have a very extensive trial. With his first maxim, to attend to one thing at a time, we entirely agree. First learn to keep in the saddle, and leave the guiding of the horse to a groom; but here again comes in the ludicrous side of the picture. Fancy a middle-aged man being led about his paddock by his groom, jolting as the horse trots, swaying from side to side, and only saving himself from coming to grass by hanging on to the pommel of the saddle. We will only add this advice to the elderly scholar—get rid of that groom immediately you have learned to stick on your horse. But if the pupil has the necessary stolidity to go through the author's instructions, we have little doubt but that he will become a sufficiently good horseman for ordinary road work, and to this extent we believe the book before us has a value.

But now let us see how the author proposes to make a finished hunter. With the ordinary preliminaries of lunging and backing Mr. Phillipps does not interfere, and he states that the breaking of a colt may be safely intrusted to any ordinary rough-rider in whose sobriety and good temper one has perfect confidence. Then comes the "suppling" of the future hunter; and first he has to be "balanced," which means that by the use of the curb and spur he is taught to arch his neck, to get his hind legs well under him, and to behave generally in the same manner as the chargers of the Horse Guards do when keeping back the mob on Lord Mayor's day. The next process in "suppling" is to teach the horse to move sideways, with his neck gently curved aside so as to look to the direction in which he is stepping—another accomplishment of our friends of the Life Guards. When the hunter is perfect in this, you must teach him to turn to right and left, both on his fore and hind legs; in fact, to *pirouette* generally. All these before-mentioned movements are to be executed by the horse at a halt, a walk, a trot, a canter, and a gallop; but even after riding him "at the collected walk, trot, and gallop successively, including, of course, lessons in circling on the move, passing, and cantering with alternate legs," in 150 lessons of half an hour each, we regret to say that the intended sportsman has not got a perfect hunter; for then comes the "finishing." And now we must assure the reader that we have not been attributing to the hunter what is intended as a part of the education of the cava'ry horse only, for Mr. Phillipps says that this "suppling" process is more necessary to the hunter than to the hack. The process of "finishing" consists chiefly in teaching him to jump standing the semblance of an ordinary five-barred gate. Mr. Phillipps very properly says that there is no English county in which the ordinary five-barred gate is not very common; that its height is very insignificant—only some 3 feet 9 inches,—requiring the horse to rise about 4 feet; he then proceeds: "Now, I believe I speak within compass when I say that the steadiest horse will seldom, in leaping at the gallop, take off at a distance from his fence less than double its height. And therefore every horse which gallops at a five-barred gate must do so with the knowledge that, if he fails to clear at least 16 feet in his stride, he is pretty sure to get a very violent fall." We have noticed in hunting men what we considered an undue repugnance to negotiate these five-barred gates, but Mr. Phillipps has explained it all. Fancy a nice new oak gate placed in the middle of a room 16 feet long, and then think, ladies, that your husbands are in the habit of clearing the lot! No wonder gates are oftener jumped in after-dinner conversation than in reality. We wonder for whose benefit the author produced that frightful picture. The hunter being thus finished, we can only suggest to the author to take him down with the Quorn or the Pytchley, where his accomplishments would attract their due attention, and not to waste such a perfect animal on the downs of Surrey or the wooded hills of Kent. In the shires a perfect hunter is worth any sum the owner chooses to ask for him. Fancy the admiration of the ladies at the meet as Bucephalus arches his neck and champs his bit, so different from the other horrid brutes that are raking at their snaffles and boring the arms off their riders. But then we have a doubt whether Bucephalus may not take to "piaffing," "passaging," or "circling" at the first fence, should that not

prove to be the experimental five-barred gate, and if it be the latter, we doubt whether the tearing brutes other men are mounted on will wait for the perfect hunter to stop and take the timber standing in his own accomplished manner. In the mean time, with a good scent over the pastures, where are the hounds? Reformers will always have enemies, and we fear Mr. March Phillipps will find that he is not the exception proving the rule. After he has completed the education of the horses he must educate the hounds, so that they may not commit the impropriety of running away from him. He had also better educate the men, for the horrid language they are likely to use to him when he "passages" in front of them at a fence will certainly shock the author of "Jurisprudence."

THE SECRET DISPATCH.*

MR. GRANT is gifted with a lively style admirably adapted for the narratives of adventure to which he chiefly devotes his labour. He also possesses considerable descriptive power and he has had large experience in story-telling. These qualities he has brought to bear in an eminent degree upon the relation of the perils of Captain Balgonie, a young Scottish gentleman who holds a post of honour in the service of Catherine II. of Russia; and is the bearer of the fatal missive from the Empress to her commander of the fortress of Schlussemburg, the Bastille of the country, directing that its prisoner of state, Ivan IV., shall not be permitted to fall alive into the hands of those friends who have determined upon attempting his rescue. The brief, sad life of Ivan, who has been from infancy a prisoner in the fortress under the designation of the Person Unknown, who has not been allowed to discover anything of the ways of the outer world, and who is gentle and pure-minded as a child, contains all the elements requisite for an attractive story; but Mr. Grant seems scarcely to have turned these elements to so much advantage as he might have done. Whether owing to the want of space to weave out the web to the full pattern of the author's design, or on account of hurried construction, the materials, which are ample enough for an exciting narrative of treble the length of this one, are so manipulated that the reader is impressed during the first half of the volume with a sense of tenuity of thought, notwithstanding the fact that the action is direct and rapid. First the captain has lost his way in the forest, and is obliged to ford the Louga at peril of his life; then he finds shelter in a hospitable castle, which proves to be the paternal home of a brother officer, whose sister—a brunette and a passionate patriot—at once charms the adventurer and reciprocates the passion she inspires. Following upon this we have a description of Corporal Padatchkine, the false guide of the captain. This worthy has pledged himself to obtain possession of the secret dispatch at any cost, in consideration of a bribe, and has first misled and then deserted his master. A Russian gipsy and his sister are picturesquely presented as the tenants of a forest hut—the brother a somewhat stagey villain, prepared for any atrocity, and the sister, a well-disposed wench, with a grateful memory of some kindness rendered to her by Balgonie. Paulovitch, the gipsy, agrees to assist the corporal in his designs, but really means to play him and the captain both false, whilst his sister Olga determines to save the hero. The manner in which she does so is exciting. The captain, having recovered from an illness which has detained him at the friendly mansion, resumes his journey, again under the guidance of the treacherous Padatchkine, whose excuse for desertion, by the way, is not explained. The bearer of the dread missive is rescued by Olga from the fate intended for him, and in the twelfth chapter reaches his destination. Then the story really becomes captivating, and the power with which Mr. Grant on many former occasions has charmed thousands of readers is displayed with full vigour. But here the arrangement of the story is at fault, and very seriously so; for there are only twelve chapters left to deal with material which should have occupied a much larger space. The result of that condition is that incidents and characters are crowded upon each other without the detail requisite to render them properly effective. The blind devotion of Mierowitz and Usakoff, deserters from the army of the Empress, in the hope of releasing Ivan and establishing him on the throne; the grand patriotism of Natalie, which sustains her even when love itself is at stake; the attempted rising, the attack upon Schlussemburg, and the horrors which follow that futile effort of a handful of enthusiasts, are all so huddled together that

* The Secret Dispatch; or, the Adventures of Captain Balgonie. By James Grant, Author of "Romance of War," &c. One vol. London: Virtue & Co.

the reader is not permitted to see their import or to feel the interest in them which they should inspire in his breast. The book is closed with a sensation of horror merely, which is scarcely at all relieved by the admirably-contrived rescue of Natalie. We are indebted to Mr. Grant for many pleasant hours' reading, and it is a pity that he has not used the materials of this work more deliberately. The result could not have failed to be one of his most successful productions; for, as it is, everywhere it contains evidences of careful and considerable study, which must have rendered the labour of the arrangement and of the collection of material most arduous. Some of the descriptive passages possess the vividness and perspicuity of personal observation, and, in spite of the objections we have been constrained to make, the story is refreshing in style and character when contrasted with the mass of novels in current circulation. We can heartily recommend it as a book presenting in an amusing form phases of life concerning which little is generally known.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS FOR THE WEEK.

- Ainsley (T. L.), Guide Book to Local Marine Board Examinations. 17th edit. 8vo., 6s.
- Engineer's Manual. 2nd edit. 8vo., 6s.
- Examiner in Seamanship. 18th edit. 8vo., 1s. 6d.
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- Allan (H.), Prize Essay on Kleptomania. 8vo., 3s.
- Biblia Sacra Polyglotta. Edited by S. Lee. 2 vols. Folio, £8. 8s.
- Bismarck (Count): a Political Biography. By L. Bamberger. Feap., 3s. 6d.
- Boutell (Rev. C.), Arms and Armour in Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Cr. 8vo., 7s. 6d.
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- Carpenter (J. E.), The Public School Speaker and Reader. Cr. 8vo., 5s.
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